Daily Report

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Near East & South Asia

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Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 17 May

NC2505091194

[Editorial report] The following review of the 17 May issue of Cairo AL-SHA'B summarizes articles that are Islamic in nature.

CONTENTS:

1. Lawyers Continue Protests Over Colleague's Death
2. President Sued Over Satellite Dishes
3. Gaza-Jericho Agreement Denounced
4. Islamic Group Denies Killing Copts
5. Clergymen To Testify Over Mufti's Rulings
6. Islamic Group Members To Be Arrested
7. Government Weekly Accused of Stirring Sedition
8. Liquidation of Islamic Society Denounced

LAWYERS CONTINUE PROTESTS OVER COLLEAGUE'S DEATH

Pages one-three of the 17 May AL-SHA'B are devoted to reports and articles protesting the death of Lawyer 'Abd-al-Harith Madani, allegedly by torture, while in police custody on 26 April. The collective headline reads: "Lawyers' Uprising: The Strike is Successful and a Peaceful March to 'Abidin Palace Is Planned Today." Under the headline, the main story notes that the Lawyers Association is to organize a "peaceful march" on 17 May from the association building in Cairo to the Presidential Palace in 'Abidin to protest Madani's death by torture at the State Security Intelligence Department in al-Jizah. The report adds that demonstrators will carry banners denouncing torture and demanding the trial of police officers involved in torturing Madani.

Chief Editor Majdi Ahmad Husayn, in an approximately 800-word article on page one entitled "The People's Wrath Is the Fire That Will Burn the Hands of Despotism," refers to the forthcoming march and adds that Madani's "assassination" is a crime that "must not pass." He explains that if this crime were to be allowed to pass unnoticed and its culprits left unpunished, more people would be murdered by torture every day. Referring to an unspecified State Security Intelligence statement, Husayn argues that the statement contains fresh incriminating evidence. He explains: "At first they claimed Madani died of low blood pressure. Then they announced that he died of asthma; this is the first time we have heard of someone dying of asthma. Their latest statement was tantamount to justifying the murder. And why not, since he was the link between the Islamic groups at home and abroad?" Claiming that such contradictions smack of a cover-up, Husayn asks why these charges were not announced from the start and why the forensic report was, as he, states, hidden. Majdi concludes by saying that confronting terrorism with torture will only result in more terrorism and that using torture to extract information easily will provide fertile ground for armed resistance of the authorities.

An approximately 1,200-word unattributed report by Ashraf Khalil on page one describes the contacts among the Lawyers Association members and political and judicial officials over Madani's death. Khalil notes that the "political leadership has summoned" the association's chief, Ahmad al-Khawajah, to listen to his argument over the case. Al-Khawajah explained that his association strongly suspects that Madani died of torture and submitted several demands to contain the situation and the lawyers' anger. He demanded that the lawyers see the forensic report on Madani's death, that the officers responsible for his death be named, and that 35 detained lawyers be released. The writer explains that the political and security leaders promised to meet the demands but to release only 15 of the detained lawyers. In return, the security leaders called on the lawyers to be calm and refrain from staging demonstrations. But the deal collapsed following the Interior Ministry's statement charging Madani in a state security case.

An approximately 600-word unattributed report on pages one and seven refers to a statement by Amnesty International expressing concern over the death of Madani. The statement notes that a representative of the organization met Madani briefly on 24 April and set an appointment to meet him again the same week. But Madani did not show up on time. The organization later learned that he was arrested at his office on 26 April and reportedly tortured to death. The statement adds that Madani is said to have been whipped and beaten and to have received electric shocks in custody. Amnesty International urged the Egyptian authorities to clear up the issue before the public, name the people responsible for his murder, if proven, and put them on trial.

Reports on the general strike observed by lawyers throughout Egypt on 15 May to protest Madani's murder are detailed on pages two and three. According to the reports, the strike was observed unanimously in every governorate and judges sympathized with the lawyers by postponing cases scheduled for that day. On the same pages, correspondents Ashraf Khalil and Mu'tazz al-Hadidi describe a news conference in Cairo at the Lawyers Association building in which several association members spoke. Mukhtar Nuh, secretary general of the association, revealed that the Interior Ministry falsely accused Madani of practicing terrorism. He added: "The interior minister, in a bid to cover up the murder of 'Abd-al-Harith Madani, named an organization discovered a few days earlier and accused the martyr of being a member of that organization." The names of 34 lawyers still held in custody are listed on page three. A statement by the Freedoms Committee in the Lawyers Association above the list of names promises that it will no longer tolerate the detention, torture, or murder of any lawyers and promises to remain in open session unless all the detainees are released unconditionally.

Muslim Brotherhood member and columnist Muhammad 'Abd-al-Quddus, in an approximately 700-word on page 12, salutes the association members for their courageous stance in protest of Madani's death. He

contends that the Interior Ministry's statement on Madani's death shows "shortsightedness" in picking on asthma as the alleged cause of death instead of a "heart attack" or a "brain stroke," which lead to immediate death in almost every case. After explaining that the "ruling regime" is notorious worldwide for its violation of human rights, he notes that Madani's murder has exposed the faults of a regime in which the "head of state enjoys almost absolute powers."

PRESIDENT SUED OVER SATELLITE DISHES

An approximately 1,500-word report by Muhammad Hilal on page four notes that Muhammad Mahmud 'Ali Hamid, a lawyer from Upper Egypt, has taken the president, prime minister, information minister, and interior minister to court for being "in one way or another" responsible for allowing the operation in Egypt of satellite dishes, which he says take "obscene films" into Egyptian homes. Hamid believes that the decisions permitting the import of antennas are invalid, since they run contrary to Article 2 of the Constitution, which stipulates that Islam is the state's religion and that Islamic shari'ah is the primary source of legislation, and to Article 12, which obliges society to "observe and protect ethics," the people's "national and moral values," and "public ethics." He says that "Arab countries, the United States, and the Jews operate television channels to broadcast purely sexual and homosexual movies to undermine the heavenly religions in general and Islam in particular." Concluding his lawsuit, Hamid explains: "It is a matter of time before these antennas deal a poisonous blow to society's creed, ethics, and traditions." He urges the court to suspend the decisions allowing the operation and circulation of these dishes and to oblige the president, prime minister, and information and interior ministers to withdraw those dishes already operating from Egyptian homes. The writer explains that Hamid approached the mufti's office for a fatwa, or religious ruling, on the dish, only to be turned down by officials there on grounds that the issues is beyond their jurisdiction.

GAZA-JERICHO AGREEMENT DENOUNCED

Muslim Brotherhood writer Ahmad al-Malat, in an approximately 2,000-word article on page five, expresses the Muslim Brotherhood's opinion on the "fiasco" at the ceremony in which the Gaza-Jericho Self-Rule Agreement was signed in Cairo on 4 May. Al-Malat suggests that by signing the "deed of submission" at the ceremony, 'Arafat thought he was giving a hand to the "tough delivery" of the hoped-for Palestinian state, but the truth is that the deal will produce nothing but a "self-rule locality" housing those left of the inhabitants of the usurped Palestine in an area not exceeding 2 percent of the lost land of Palestine. Addressing 'Arafat, he says: "The statelet you imagine is about to see light will be nothing but a meek lamb in a forest guarded by Zionist wolves, who audaciously declare that the people left in that area are nothing but cockroaches to be squashed underfoot." After reviewing the Palestinian story from the establishment of Israel in 1948 up to the 1967 defeat of the Arabs by Israel, al-Malat claims that 'Arafat, that day, "committed a fatal error and a major sin by recognizing Israel as a sovereign state that has a right to exist on the remains of slaughtered Palestine." He believes 'Arafat's behavior is the result of one of two things: "idiocy or treason." Al-Malat adds that 'Arafat has forgotten that "Palestine, including the al-Aqsa Mosque and holy Jerusalem, represents a trust in the hands of Muslims worldwide, not an item left to the care of the PLO to dispose of as it pleases." He adds: "Honesty dictates that if the PLO cannot protect this trust, it must return it to its owners, not hand it over to the enemy of yesterday, today, and tomorrow." He concludes by suggesting that since there is no room in Palestine for both Palestinians and Jews, then either the land is given back to the people evicted from it or things remain as they are. He adds: "Thus there is no choice but to carry arms against the aggressor and to try to restore right, even if this takes centuries. The jihad is an inalienable obligation binding each Muslim until right is restored and the invaders are expelled from this dear part of the land of Islam."

ISLAMIC GROUP DENIES KILLING COPTS

An approximately 120-word on page 7 refers to a statement issued by the Islamic Group denying the killing of Copts in Egypt.

CLERGYMEN TO TESTIFY OVER MUFTI'S RULINGS

An approximately 400-word report by Sha'ban 'Abd-al-Rahman on page seven notes that the Cairo Court of Misdemeanors has decided to summon al-Azhar Grand Imam Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq, other clergymen, and Islamic economic experts to testify on Mufti Shaykh Sayyid Tantawi's fatwas on banking transactions, the import of alcoholic drinks for non-Muslims, and the opening of casinos for tourists. The court's decision has come at the request of a team of lawyers defending Dr. 'Ali al-Salusi, professor of economy at Qatar University; Dr. Sha'ban Muhammad Isma'il, head of the Shari'ah Department at al-Azhar University; and 'Ali Faruq, chief editor of the newspaper AL-NUR, who have been taken to court by Mufti Tantawi on libel charges for challenging his fatwas and calling for his dismissal from office for passing rulings that run contrary to the Koran and the prophet's tradition. Another court earlier sentenced the defendants to a six-month prison term and a fine of 600 Egyptian pounds but the defendants appealed the court decision.

ISLAMIC GROUP MEMBERS TO BE ARRESTED

'Ala' al-Bahhar, in 240 words on page 7, writes that the security agencies plan a campaign of arrests among active members of extremist groups in the coming two weeks.

GOVERNMENT WEEKLY ACCUSED OF STIRRING SEDITION

An approximately 350-word report by 'Adil al-Bahnasawi on the same page notes that Major General Ahmad Sadiq, chief of police in the Upper Egyptian Governorate of al-Minya, has accused a governmental weekly magazine of inciting sedition by publishing what he says are lies and groundless reports on the Islamic groups in his governorate. In a statement to AL-SHA'B, Maj. Gen. Sadiq denied reports published in the magazine about the Islamic Group's control of al-Husayni Street in al-Minya. The security official pointed out: "Some people belonging to the Islamic Group rented shops next to the National Democratic Party headquarters after obtaining legal licenses from the City Council." Their activity has been scrutinized and found to be legal, he added. Maj. Gen. Sadiq issued a challenge to prove reports in the same magazine, said to be notorious for publishing "lies" about the Islamic Group, that the Islamic Group orders people in Mallawi, a town in al-Minya Governorate, to pay extortion money to the group. He also denied reports that members of the group do not permit women and men to ride on the same public transport vehicles.

LIQUIDATION OF ISLAMIC SOCIETY DENOUNCED

An approximately 400-word unattributed report on page 7 notes that the Labor Party Committee in Alexandria has issued a statement on "tragic events" in the al-Wardiyan District. The events followed the Alexandria governor's decision to dissolve the "Al-I'tisam Bi Habl Illah" religious society, which is based at the Abu-'Umar Mosque in Alexandria and supervised by several local council members from the Labor Party. The statement notes that contrary to the people's desires, the mosque was taken over by the Ministry of Social Affairs and a progovernment board of directors was appointed to run the society. This, the report adds, has angered the people in the neighborhood, who clashed with the policemen brought to the area to expel the society's legitimate board of directors. The statement called for the immediate release of all local council members and citizens who were arrested on charges of "rioting."

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 17 May

NC2405190594

[Editorial report] The following review of the 17 May issue of Cairo 'AQIDATI summarizes articles that are Islamic in nature.

CONTENTS:

1. Publishers of Book Criticizing Islam Condemned
2. Shop Signs Must Be in Arabic
3. Grand Imam To Inaugurate Round of Lectures for Imams
4. Reasons for, Options of Repeated Pilgrimage Viewed
5. Writer Assails Mufti Over Court Case
6. Preacher Recounts Incident of Challenging Extremists
7. Satellite Dishes: Moral or Immoral?
8. Islamic Ifta' Council: Imams for or Against?
9. The Koran at the White House
10. Writer Condemns Yemeni War
11. Saudi Preacher Interviewed
12. Copts Congratulate Muslims on 'Id al-Adha
13. Writer Laments State of Muslims During 'Id al-Adha

PUBLISHERS OF BOOK CRITICIZING ISLAM CONDEMNED

Salah 'Abd-al-Mu'ti writes in a 300-word report on page 1 about "a new crime committed by the General Book Committee," which has published a book entitled "Toward the Real Islam—Studies in the Koran Bring to Light the True Islam" by Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-'Arusi, a professor at an unspecified university. The book attacks some Islamic rites and rituals and their timing. The writer also makes some "demands" such as "unifying prayer times, the world over, for all Muslims, throughout the year." The writer claims his motive for writing the book was that "it became evident that we are remote from Islam while clinging to its facade and have forgotten its essence." The report maintains that the Awqaf Ministry will prepare a book to counter these arguments.

SHOP SIGNS MUST BE IN ARABIC

A 100-word report by Mustafa 'Alam-al-Din on page 2 says that Cairo Governor 'Umar 'Abd-al-Akhar has demanded strict measures against shop-owners who use foreign languages in their shop signs. He threatened to withdraw the licenses of those who violate this law. "The language of the Koran, the Arabic language which is this country's national language, should be respected," the report says.

GRAND IMAM TO INAUGURATE ROUND OF LECTURES FOR IMAMS

On page 2 'AQIDATI carries another unattributed 100-word report that on 17 May Grand Imam of al-Azhar Jad-al-Haq 'Ali Jad-al-Haq will inaugurate "the 25th round for imams and preachers of the Islamic world organized by the General Secretariat of the al-Azhar Higher Council for the Call." The report lists the countries participating as well as the speakers and lecturers.

REASONS FOR, OPTIONS OF REPEATED PILGRIMAGE VIEWED

Page 3 of 'AQIDATI features an opinion survey by Musa Hal and Mahmud 'Ushub polling ordinary citizens, imams, and men of religion on the issue of the fairness of performing the pilgrimage more than once in a lifetime. Islamic shari'ah stipulates that pilgrimage once in a lifetime is enough, but many citizens travel every year. They have turned pilgrimage into what travel agents are calling "touristic pilgrimages." The issue here is that the Islamic Conference Organization has set quotas on the number of pilgrims that various countries can send, giving well-to-do pilgrims an edge over the poor. Among

other men of religion, the survey poses this question to the mufti of Egypt, Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, who maintains that "those capable of performing the pilgrimage every year should give an opportunity to those who have never done so in their life." He believes there is nothing in the shari'ah that can prevent the issuance of a law on this matter. Other men of religion agree with the mufti's opinion and claim that instead of performing the pilgrimage a second time, people should donate food and money to the poor. To conclude, the survey interviews a psychiatrist who analyzes the reasons why people perform the pilgrimage over and over again, including such things as habit, religious overstatement, and tourism.

WRITER ASSAILS MUFTI OVER COURT CASE

In his 400-word column on page 6 entitled "With All Frankness," Basyuni al-Halawani maintains that the "Court ruling the mufti of the republic, Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, secured to imprison Dr. Sha'ban Isma'il, Dr. 'Ali al-Salus, and their colleague 'Ali Faruq, is not a victory for the mufti in this case against those who do not agree with his opinion and oppose some of his fatwas and teachings. The real arena for settling such a matter is the arena of the intellect, opinion, and counteropinion, not in court where only the guilty and deviant normally go." Al-Halawani stresses that he does not defend one side against the other, but says he is sad at the state of affairs our wise men have reached. He reminds the mufti that "Islam set the ideal principles and bases for dialogue and allowed each individual to express his opinion and ideas in a way that does not abuse others." The writer concludes that some ulema tend to forget these basic Islamic principles, thus losing the people's confidence in them.

PREACHER RECOUNTS INCIDENT OF CHALLENGING EXTREMISTS

A 200-word unattributed report on page 7 cites a sermon by a preacher in which he tells a story that happened to him 20 years ago when he challenged the ideology of the Repudiation and Renunciation Group as a student in his village in al-Sharqiyah. Three bearded men with a great deal of money settled in his village, bought many houses and shops, and claimed that true Muslims do not need to work since God provides for all their needs. At first they had a great following, but he managed to expose them by watching them for 24 hours. He found out that truckloads of various supplies were being delivered to them at 0300 in the morning. He informed the residents of the village who kicked them out of their village.

SATELLITE DISHES: MORAL OR IMMORAL?

In a 3,000-word report on page 8 prepared by Musa Hal, questions from citizens on various religious issues are answered. One query comes from a young girl in al-Daqahliyah Governorate on whether the large-scale use of satellite dishes is moral or not. This is answered by Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Athim al-Humayli, member of al-Azhar's Fatwa Committee, who is flattered by the young lady's concern about such a matter. He ascertains that the same law that applies to other media applies to the dish. In other words, the use of the dish in itself is not bad, but if the programs it brings to the viewer are immoral, "then the Muslim state is reponsible for putting an end to this." He says: "The West has directed these dishes at us; they are dishes for hunger and starvation. There is evil in them. This goes against our religion because religion wants mankind to improve themselves and elevate their feelings and conscientiousness."

ISLAMIC IFTA' COUNCIL: IMAMS FOR OR AGAINST?

Jamal Salim's 2,000-word report on page 10 feels the pulse of various imams and muftis on the establishment of a higher council for ifta' [legal jurisdiction] in the Islamic world. He cites various religious leaders from Macedonia, Bosnia, Belgrade, Singapore, and elsewhere, all of whom support the establishment of such a council. "Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, the mufti of Egypt, also supports the establishment of such a council for muftis. He said he will work with all his might to establish it" the writer maintains. Al-Azhar University President Dr. 'Abd-al-Fattah al-Shaykh has a different opinion on the matter, though. He believes that "al-Azhar's Islamic Research Center could serve instead of such a council, if everyone adheres to its fatwas."

THE KORAN AT THE WHITE HOUSE

A 100-word report on page 20 cites a report in the French magazine JEUNE AFRIQUE that President Bill Clinton discovered in September that there is no copy of the Koran in the White House. He was preparing a speech to be delivered at the signing ceremony of the peace agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis. One of his aides drew his attention to the fact that he had used quotes from the Bible and the Torah, but not the Koran. The magazine claims "Clinton used a copy of the Koran from one of the libraries in Washington."

WRITER CONDEMNS YEMENI WAR

In a 200-word column on page 20, 'Adil Dayf wonders in whose interest the internecine fighting in Yemen is taking place. He stresses that the sole beneficiaries are "the foreigners, of course." The Yemeni people are the losers, as is the Islamic world and nation. Dayf says: "We call on the sons of the nation to set aside their marginal differences and concentrate their efforts on catching up with progress while adhering to their religion, which condemns all forms of violence and destruction, and always calls for forgiveness."

SAUDI PREACHER INTERVIEWED

On page 20 'AQIDATI carries an interview by Mustafa Yasin and Tariq 'Abdallah with Dr. Mana' Khalil al-Qattan, a Saudi Islamic preacher, in which he discusses attacks by Westerners and the West's hostility, which are the two most dangerous things for Islam now. He also stresses that all Islamic resources should be unified to serve contemporary matters.

COPTS CONGRATULATE MUSLIMS ON 'ID AL-ADHA

A 400-word article on page 23 by Mamduh Bishri carries congratulations to the Muslims on 'Id al-Adha from the Copts of Egypt. The column notes that both religions stress love for our fellow man.

WRITER LAMENTS STATE OF MUSLIMS DURING 'ID AL-'ADHA

In his last-page 500-word column entitled "A Call to Common Sense", al-Sayyid 'Abd-al-Ra'uf wishes he could have congratulated the Muslim world on 'Id al-Adha with an open heart and great hope for the future. He says he hoped the 'Id would have come after the Muslims had succeeded in saving their brothers in Bosnia, started developing Somalia, helped the Muslim minorities around the world, and had a greater say in the new world order. "In fact, we were surprised that the government crisis in 'united' Yemen turned into a civil war", he laments.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Decree Reinstates Pre-1967 Laws, Orders

NC2505052894 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 24 May 94 p 4

[Decree issued by PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Tunis on 20 May 1994]

[Text] Decree:

The chairman of the Palestinian National Authority,
the chairman of the PLO Executive Committee,
in accordance with the PLO Executive Committee decision,
and in accordance with the powers invested in him,
decrees the following:

1. The laws, regulations, and orders that were operational before 5 June 1967 in the Palestinian territories [the West Bank and Gaza Strip] will remain in force until they are standardized.

2. The various regular and religious courts will continue to do their work in accordance with the existing laws and orders.

3. Regular and religious judges and public prosecutors will continue to exercise their work each in his own field of jurisdiction in accordance with the laws.

4. This decree will take effect from the date it is issued, will be conveyed to those who will implement it, and will be published in the official gazette.

Tunis, 9 Dhu al-Hijjah 1414 Hegira, corresponding to 20 May 1994.

Yasir 'Arafat,

chairman of the PLO Executive Committee

chairman of the Palestinian National Authority

Abu-Zayyad Defends 'Arafat Decree on Laws

TA2505080194 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 25 May 94

[Telephone interview with Ziyad Abu-Zayyad by Ya'el Dan and Itay Engel; place not given—live]

[Text] [Dan] We will now move on to the crisis of confidence between the PLO and the Israeli Government. In a unilateral step, which contravenes the agreement with Israel, PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat published a decree in the East Jerusalem press abrogating all Israeli laws in the Palestinian autonomous areas. The decree states that from now on, the only laws in effect are those that existed before 1967. Contrary to the promise 'Arafat made to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, the PLO's insignia, with a map of all of Eretz Yisra'el, appears on the decree. Furthermore, in the decree, 'Arafat is referred to the president of the Palestinian National Authority, and this constitutes a violation of the agreement. Good morning to Attorney Ziyad Abu-Zayyad, a senior PLO official.

[Abu-Zayyad] Good morning.

[Dan] Why is 'Arafat in such a rush to violate the agreement before he has even begun to keep it?

[Abu-Zayyad] In my opinion, there is a problem here with the Israeli opposition, as well as with some of the Israelis who support the peace process. They immediately get into a panic and start looking for ways to prove how unreliable the other side is. Several moments ago, you said that 'Arafat had issued a decree canceling the Israeli laws that were in force in the territories. I have the decree here in front of me, and there is no mention of the things you just reported. I do not know where you got the information for your report.

[Dan] 'Arafat says: the laws, regulations, and decrees that prevailed in the Palestinian territories in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip before 5 June 1967 will remain in effect.

[Abu-Zayyad] Okay, what else?

[Dan] The civilian, ethnic, and religious courts at the various levels will continue to operate according to the existing laws and regulations, with the reference apparently being to those that have been in force since 1967. I do not want to go on in detail, however....

[Abu-Zayyad, interrupting] No, just wait a minute. As a legal expert, I would like to take this opportunity to say that I do not see anything here that violates the agreement with the Israeli party.

[Engel] Before you get into any details, perhaps you could tell us: Since when does 'Arafat have legislative powers?

[Abu-Zayyad] I will explain myself in a moment. This decree stipulates that the situation will remain as it is. The decision does not mention the Israeli military decrees or the Israeli military courts.

[Dan] But is there not a contradiction, at the very least, here?

[Abu-Zayyad] No. There is a chapter in the Oslo agreement that refers to a committee that will review all the military decrees currently in force in the territories. As far as the Palestinians are concerned, there is an even tougher clause in the Cairo agreement, which states that the Palestinians have the authority to legialste in those fields turned over to their control; however, any law they wish to enact must be brought before a joint committee that will decide within 45 days whether or not the law is relevant. In other words, the Cairo agreement gives Israel veto rights even in those fields that were turned over to the Palestinians.

[Dan] Mr. Yo'el Singer, who helped formulate the agreements in Oslo, asserts that the decree published by 'Arafat constitutes a very flagrant violation of the Oslo agreement.

[Abu-Zayyad] I beg to differ. I disagree with him on this issue. I think that the decree states that some of the laws that have been in force in the West Bank up to this moment also existed prior to 1967. Therefore, they will remain valid. Second, in the same decree, 'Arafat states that the civilian, shar'iyah, and other religious courts will continue to operate according to the existing laws and regulations. This means that, practically speaking, he is not canceling anything. The judges and prosecutors will also keep their jobs. In my opinion, there is nothing new here and certainly no violation of the agreement. I have no intention of whitewashing things or misleading anyone. I think that anyone reading this decree should immediately ask himself what is missing and what is not mentioned here. The fact that something is not mentioned here does not mean that it has been canceled or annulled. The contrary is true.

[Engel] Well, there is no point in expanding on this subject, because it appears that beyond the gap in positions, there are also quite large differences with regard to what has already been agreed and both parties' legal interpretation of the agreement. But before we get into details, let me ask you about the principles. Who gave the PLO or 'Arafat legislative powers? The agreement stipulates that such powers will only be awarded to the Palestinian Authority, which has not yet been established, and even when established, the Palestinian Authority must coordinate all legislation with Israel.

[Abu-Zayyad] Look, in principle, legislative powers derive from the people. Legislative authority is bestowed by the people. Now, within the specific and unique conditions under which we are operating, there is an agreement, and all parties must uphold the agreements they sign and implement them both in spirit and letter. In my opinion, the question of whether we are violating the agreement will only be proved by developments in the field and by the way we interpret and implement the agreement in practice.

[Dan] Even the symbolic step of using the PLO insignia with a map of Palestine that includes all of Eretz Yisra'el also constitutes a violation of the agreement. Above all, it is an ostentatious provocation.

[Abu-Zayyad] I have a copy of AL-QUDS with the published decree right here in front of me. There is no such insignia.

[Dan] But I see it right here in front of my eyes.

[Abu-Zayyad] No. Which newspaper are you looking at? AL-QUDS?

[Dan] No, I am looking at MA'ARIV, which copied the decree.

[Abu-Zayyad] Look at page 4 of yesterday's copy of AL QUDS. There is a box. Inside the box you can find the decree. I do not know where MA'ARIV got the insignia from. I must also say that I have seen a great deal of incitement in the Israeli press. It is inciting Israeli public opinion against the agreement. I can discern an intention to undermine trust between the two parties. I would like to make the following suggestion to my colleagues in the Israeli press: We have enough doubts and fears on both sides. There is no need to add additional doubts and fears on top of what we already have. It is totally uncalled for.

[Dan] Thank you, Attorney Ziyad Abu-Zayyad.

Al-Tibi Rejects Demand for 'Arafat Commitment

TA2405193094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Ahmad al-Tibi, Yasir 'Arafat's adviser, today rejected the demand that the PLO head present a letter in which he pledges to honor the agreement with Israel. He also lashed at the demand that Prime Minister Rabin send the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] into the Gaza Strip. Dr. al-Tibi demanded that the interim period be shortened because he believes five years is too long a period during which to form the permanent solution. According to him, circumstances on the ground will force the parties to immediately begin negotiating the permanent solution.

Speaking at a seminar on the peace process at the Ben-Gurion University in Beersheba, Dr. al-Tibi said that the Palestinian goal is to establish an independent state, the capital of which will be East Jerusalem. According to him, there are cabinet ministers who support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. He believes that the settlements can be kept in place and, after they are evacuated by the settlers, they could be populated by the Palestinian refugees.

Comments on 'Crisis of Confidence'

JN2405115294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 0954 GMT 24 May 94

[Telephone interview with Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, adviser to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, place not given, by Sa'id Mu'addi on 24 May; from the "With the Midday Events" feature—live or recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Dr. Ahmad, good afternoon.

[Al-Tibi] Good afternoon to you.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Ahmad, yesterday you sounded optimistic about a date for convening the Palestine National Council [PNC]. Perhaps there are some difficulties in getting all the PNC members together soon in the Gaza Strip.

[Al-Tibi] Did you say optimistic? I did not hear your question.

[Mu'addi] Yes.

[Al-Tibi] Did you see my television interview yesterday? I was very clear. It was in Hebrew. I said that the PNC will convene in Gaza in the future. However, I said there were some logistical, administrative, and technical problems in getting all the PNC members together from all over the world. I said if these logistical problems were solved in the future after the arrival of the Palestinian uuthority and the establishment of securnty, then Yasir 'Arafat would demonstrate commitment to the agreement he signed that the clauses that relate to the State of Israel and contravene the Oslo agreement would be amended. Therefore, I reiterate what my brother Dr. Nabil Sha'th has just said about the PNC convening in Gaza in the future. Some people quoted me as saying the PNC would convene a session shortly. I said in the future, and there is a difference between the two. Things should be clear.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Ahmad, do you expect Yasir 'Arafat to adopt another step to remove this crisis of confidence that erupted between the two sides in light of the recent statements?

[Al-Tibi] Yasir 'Arafat is not the one who created this new crisis of confidence. It is is true that there is a growing crisis of confidence. The crisis has escalated over the past two days after the Israeli accusation that 'Arafat plans to violate the agreement. Some Israeli orientalists claimed that 'Arafat intends to violate the agreement just like Prophet Muhammad violated the agreement [with the Jews]. Any primary school student knows that Quraysh was the tribe that violated the agreement and that Prophet Muhammad adhered strictly to the al-Hudaybiyah Agreement, despite the difficult conditions set for the Muslims then. Therefore, there is no need for President 'Arafat to provide another written agreement to the head of the government, Yitzhaq Rabin, or to the Israeli Government. The only commitment that Yasir 'Arafat signed and adheres to so far is the Declaration of Principles signed between 'Arafat and Rabin. Therefore, asking 'Arafat to sign another letter is unnecessary and will not be done.

[Mu'addi] One last question. Even Environment Minister Yosi Sarid, deemed by the opposition to represent the left side of the political map in Israel, has criticized Yasir 'Arafat in light of these statements.

[Al-Tibi] What is new about that? This is not the first time that Yosi Sarid criticizes Yasir 'Arafat. He is always the first to do so. There is a choir that always criticizes Yasir 'Arafat. This is not new. I respect some of Yosi Sarid's attitudes regarding human rights and the need to talk to the PLO. However, I strongly object to his style in criticizing Yasir 'Arafat. Yasir 'Arafat will not be a mayor of the town of Jericho because he is a leader of the Palestinian people. And his leadership of the Palestinian people is not confined and is not linked to statements of this sort, which are harmful and do not help promote confidence-building.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, Yasir 'Arafat's special adviser, thank you.

[Al-Tibi] You are welcome.

Sha'th on Upcoming Tunis Meeting, 'Arafat Remarks

JN2405114894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 0945 GMT 24 May 94

[Telephone Interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, member of the Palestinian National Authority, place not given, by Sa'id Mu'addi; date not given; from the "With The Midday Events" feature—live or recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, the Palestinian [National] Authority will hold its first meeting in Tunis tomorrow. What is on its agenda?

[Sha'th] The first meeting is needed to determine the action plan for moving toward Gaza and Jericho and the Palestinian land. This is the first meeting. Portfolios or responsibilities should be distributed among the members. We will complete the appointment of the other members. The total number of members should be 24. We will prepare a detailed plan of action for this authority and for its departure as soon as possible for Gaza and Jericho. We will also discuss the plan for completing the negotiations that will enable the early

assumption of powers in the West Bank and the completion of what has not been completed in the negotiations which led to the conclusion of the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

[Mu'addi] Will the names of the remaining members of the Palestinian Authority be announced tomorrow?

[Sha'th] This will be discussed tomorrow. If agreement is reached on all the names, then they will be made public. Otherwise, some of the names will be announced, and the others after going to Gaza and Jericho.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, reports mention that the Palestine National Council [PNC] will soon meet in Gaza to strike off the National Charter provisions on Israel. What do you have to say to this?

[Sha'th] This is one of the matters brother President Yasir 'Arafat and Minister Peres had agreed upon. What is important is the the PNC meeting in Gaza will be an important meeting because it will bestow more legitimacy on the new Palestinian authority and will discuss many issues, and most certainly the PLO's commitments vis-a-vis the reciprocal recognition that took place last September.

[Mu'addi] When do you expect the PNC to meet?

[Sha'th] I do not expect it to meet before the Palestinian National Authority is firmly established on the ground and there is a real beginning of work, and complete security. I do not expect this to take place very soon.

[Mu'addi] Major General Amnon Shahaq communicated to you Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's request concerning Mr. Yasir 'Arafat's commitment to the agreement in light of the recent statements in Johannesburg?

[Sha'th] The truth is that there is an ongoing dialogue between us. It goes without saying that President 'Arafat abides by this agreement which he himself signed in Cairo on 4 May. He has no intention not to abide by what he has committed himself to. I believe that the Palestinian National Authority will certainly reemphasize the Palestinian side's abidance by this agreement.

[Mu'addi] Has Mr. 'Arafat replied to Mr. Rabin's request in this respect?

[Sha'th] The truth is that there are psychological and political matters in politics. I do not believe that what is requested is political, meaning that the one who signs an agreement abides by it. If he does not abide by his first signature, how can he be asked for another signature? The question is one of confidence. I believe there can be no doubt as to President 'Arafat's commitment to this agreement. President 'Arafat does not need a new piece of paper. If there is no confidence, then to what extent can one trust the new piece of paper? I believe the question is purely psychological. President 'Arafat is committed to what he had signed. We hope that the Israeli side is too. I hope that we would not wage this battle of statements. If one wages such a battle, then there are many statements by the Israeli side which one cannot accept as an expression of good intention about maintaining this agreement and its other requirements. I specifically have in mind Mr. [Yosi] Sarid's statements on President 'Arafat as mayor of Jericho municipality. This is something that is not in line with the agreement that President 'Arafat and Prime Minister Rabin had signed. I hope that this period of no confidence will be brief and that we all prove on the ground that we are completely serious in our commitment to all that we have signed and that we wish to proceed forward because this agreement is a transitional agreement, and we want to complete it by many other stages until we reach the definitive peace agreement that will set the bases of just and lasting peace among our two people.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil, one last question: Is 10 June the date when Mr. 'Yasir 'Arafat will arrive in the self-rule area?

[Sha'th] This is what we will discover tommorrow in the meeting in Tunis, God willing.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, member of the Palestinian Authority, thank you.

Sha'th Leaves for Tunis

NC2505130394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1215 GMT 25 May 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 May (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, left Cairo for Tunis this afternoon on a one-day visit.

During the visit, Sha'th will hold talks with the Palestinian leadership concerning the developments in the region and the preparations for the next stage of negotiations.

PLO's Ghawshah Interviewed on Current Issues

PM2405132194 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 May 94 p 5

[Interview with PLO Executive Committee member Samir Ghawshah by Rashid Khashanah in Tunis on 19 May]

[Excerpts] [Khashanah] When will President Yasir 'Arafat go to Jericho and the National Authority begin its duties?

[Ghawshah] The authority began to exercise its role on 18 May. A number of members are already inside the occupied territories. The completion of the police forces' entry and the transfer of powers from the Israelis will prepare conditions for the entry of Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] and the other members of the authority. I expect this to happen early next month. [passage omitted]

[Khashanah] Have you decided in the Executive Committee which departments will be moved to Jericho and which will stay in Tunis?

[Ghawshah] The fundamental thing is for the PLO's standing to continue. And the focus should be on the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the leader of their struggle in their various groupings inside and outside the occupied homeland. And any policies for the stage ahead should help to achieve the PLO's aims, namely the right to self-determination and the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

So it is necessary for some departments like the Political Department to remain temporarily outside the occupied homeland, especially as the Palestinian-Israeli accord prevents the Palestinian national authority from exercising its role at foreign relations level. [passage omitted]

[Khashanah] The Palestinians demand that negotiations on the final stage begin now. How can conditions be secured to achieve that?

[Ghawshah] We clearly voiced out reservations about the agreements concluded, whether during the Executive Committee's discussions, the Central Council's debates, or in separate statements. However, despite our reservations, we believe that it is possible to exert pressure to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy as soon as possible, first and foremost with regard to speeding up negotiations on the final stage.

It requires that the Arab world and the international community move to bolster the Palestinian people's just struggle and help them to recover their rights, first and foremost the right to repatriation and self-determination, and to establish an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

[Khashanah] The economic Palestinian-Israeli agreement has cast shadows on Jordanian-Palestinian relations which have not been cleared by the recent meeting between the Jordanian information minister and the PLO Economic Department director. How will you reduce Jordan's concerns?

[Ghawshah] We proceed from the special relationship between the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples, which is deeper and more comprehensive than any present or future agreement.

And of course, the interest in this special relationship should be translated into tangible realities in all spheres and at all levels. As for recent economic talks, they dealt with basic issues concerning monetary, trade, and tourism issues, which are all part of an agreement concluded between Jordan and Palestine. And efforts must continue to secure practical and tangible agreements that serve the two peoples in the present and the future. [passage omitted]

King Fahd Reiterates Support for Palestinians

LD2405180794 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Brother President 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, received a reply message from his brother Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, king of the fraternal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and custodian of the two holy mosques.

The message stated: We stress that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, stemming from its firm stands and its everlasting fraternal links with the brotherly Palestinian people, will—God willing—remain as ever supportive of the legitimate cause to accomplish the security and just peace that will guarantee its legitimate rights and realize its benevolent objectives in the return to its homeland and the establishment of its independent state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

PNA Chooses Financial Group to Manage Funds

LD2405183394 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] The Palestinian National Authority [PNA] announced today that it had appointed Morgan Stanley Asset Management, MSAM, to manage the funds given to administer and develop the West Bank and the Gaza strip under the leadership of the PNA.

This institution, which manages funds estimated at 50 billion dollars, is a subsidiary of the Stanley Morgan Group [as heard], a large financial institution that has offices in the world's main financial centers.

The PNA said that it had chosen this institution to help in reassuring the donor states and agencies that the funds they had given to the PNA for the administration and development of the West Bank and Gaza were being managed with complete transparency and in a proficient and professional way through one of the world's eminent financial institutions.

'Arafat Said Divorcing Wife Over Financial Affairs

LD2505083394 Rome RAI Uno Television Network in Italian 0730 GMT 25 May 94

[Text] PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat has allegedly divorced his wife Suha al-Tawil because she is involved—with her uncle and other relatives—in not very clear financial affairs, non-official Palestinian sources have revealed.

Egypt

Musa News Conference on Sudan, Yemen, 'Arafat

NC2405163694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Cairo, 24 May (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stressed that if Sudan continues to take measures against Egyptian interests in Khartoum, Egypt will not remain silent; it will reconsider its policy toward Sudan.

During a news conference he held today, the foreign minister said that despite allegations, which all have a weak and illegal basis, the Sudanese authorities' acts against Egyptian families on the day preceding 'Id al-Adha demonstrate the reckless attitude of the brothers in Sudan, not only in taking these measures but also in their timing and implementation.

Continuing, 'Amr Musa said: We disagree with the Sudanese measures and the way they were implemented. The Sudanese authorities chose the easiest but worst way to harass Egyptian families residing in Sudan. This runs counter to Islam and also lacks decency. The decisions, which were based on completely false premises, were meant to harm relations and halt any efforts to promote them, the foreign minister added.

At his news conference, the foreign minister said: I was preparing to visit Sudan, but the Sudanese authorities have decided to oppose Egypt's request to join the Preferential Trade Area [PTA] for Eastern African States. Egypt's application was opposed solely by Sudan, which threatens Egyptian interests and prevents the Egyptian people from enjoying economic cooperation with the East African states. When the Sudanese Government resorted to this stand, I decided to cancel the visit.

The foreign minister said that Sudan opposes Egyptian membership in the PTA even though Egypt has refused to take part in any international conference that might take a stand against Sudan or its interests. He said that this Egyptian position stems from Egypt's historical viewpoint favoring integration between Egypt and Sudan and fostering the brotherhood of the two peoples. Consequently, we cannot do anything against Sudan's interests. We have demonstrated this stand in the field of human rights and in the UN Security Council, UN General Assembly, the World Bank, and the IMF, 'Amr Musa added.

Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa suggested that there is a minority in Sudan trying to poison relations between Egypt and Sudan. However, Musa affirmed that Egypt will take steps only when it believes it will be necessary and useful.

During the news conference, the foreign minister said these Sudanese measures will have a negative impact on the relations between the two peoples. He reiterated Egypt's firm stand concerning the unity and territorial integrity of Sudan, even though the Sudanese Government's measures are meant to mar its relations with Egypt and other countries. The foreign minister pointed out that a minority in Sudan will not succeed in affecting the historic and deeply-rooted relations between the Sudanese and Egyptian peoples.

Regarding the situation in Yemen, the foreign minister described it as tragic and regrettable, stressing the interest in the issue of Egypt and President Husni Mubarak, as well as their keenness to find a solution to the problem there. He maintained that no Arab state would approve of the current situation in Yemen. We must candidly condemn the use of force between brothers, he said. Musa added that no one would have expected that Yemen, which was united four years ago, would end up in such a tragic political situation.

The foreign minister said that unity is a legitimate objective for all Arabs, and this also applies to the people of Yemen, both north and south. Musa added: We cannot but support the voices which call for unity. However, unity cannot be safeguarded by military action, the foreign minister said.

To a question about 'Ali Salim al-Bid's secession and decision to establish the Democratic Republic of Yemen, 'Amr Musa said: Let's wait for a while so that we can deal with the tragic situation and infighting between the Yemenis. He said no Arab state can take a mere observer stand regarding the situation in Yemen. He underlined the recent contacts by President Muhammad Husni Mubarak with the Yemeni president and a number of officials.

Foreign Minister Musa said the failure to reach a cease-fire shows the extent of the tragedy in Yemen. He added that the Arab world as a whole must handle the tragedy by halting the fighting, disengaging the armies, and seeking to reopen dialogue between the Yemenis in the north and south, because they are all Yemeni and are one nation. As for the continuing political situation, he noted it is up to the Yemeni people themselves. He emphasized that such a clash may generate a continuous conflict in most parts of Yemen.

Commenting on the Nonaligned Movement ministerial conference due to be held in Cairo on Tuesday, Musa said President Husni Mubarak will inaugurate this conference, in which 108 countries will take part, and that Egypt has so far received notice that 85 ministers will attend. He added that the conference will discuss all pressing political issues, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Somalia, and the effects of GATT [General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs].

He pointed out that Serbia and Montenegro are not the natural inheritors of Yugoslavia and hence they cannot inherit nonaligned membership automatically. He stressed that Belgrade's military operations and military policy against Bosnia, Croatia, and other republics that

used to comprise Yugoslavia are acts of aggression and violations of the UN Charter.

He said that given these violations, Belgrade cannot automatically participate in the Nonaligned Movement's meetings, noting that because of all this, Egypt did not send an invitation to Belgrade, a measure that was agreed upon with Indonesia, who currently chairs the movement.

Musa commented on the current crisis caused by Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's statements in South Africa about a jihad. He said president 'Arafat played a major role in leading the Palestinian action that recently led to the transitional agreement called Gaza-Jericho and it was 'Arafat who signed the joint statements in Oslo, Washington, and Cairo. He added: If we count on statements coming out of Israel and Palestine we will end up nowhere.

The foreign minister said: It is not right for us to hesitate because of a statement that might have been distorted or not quite understood. But what is certain, we feel, is that President 'Arafat is determined to implement the Declaration of Principles and the concluded agreement and to press ahead toward a peaceful settlement between the Palestinians and Israelis according to the principles of land for peace and rights for rights according to the Madrid formula.

He expressed his belief that we should not make any decisions based on any statement that we are not sure of as to form, content, and text, especially one that would harm rather than serve the peace process. He reiterated Egypt's readiness to advance the peace efforts in the right direction.

Musa expressed hopes for a settlement to the Libyan-Western crisis, a halt to the escalation of the situation, and a solution based on the need to respect international legitimacy and the Libyan people's right to respect for their sovereignty and rights.

The foreign minister said tensions between Iraq and Kuwait cannot be eased without an official Iraqi stand affirming that the Kuwait issue has ended and acknowledging that Kuwait is a sovereign Arab state. He explained that in the absence of this, there can be no talk about Arab relations and Iraq's return to the Arab fold.

Musa, U.S. Charge Discuss Somalia, Yemen

NC2405185194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1755 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Cairo, 24 May (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met with Edmund Hull, charge d'affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, this evening.

After the meeting, Hull said they discussed several regional issues of mutual interest, especially the situation in Somalia and Yemen. He added that Egypt and the United States are making contacts and efforts to control the situation and to halt the fighting in Yemen.

[Cairo MENA in Arabic at 0950 GMT on 25 May in a similar Cairo-datelined report adds: "Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today met Edmund Hull, charge d'affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, for the second time in 24 hours.

["Hull said afterward that they discussed developments in Yemen and coordination between Egyptian and American positions to stop the fighting there and launch a dialogue between the warring parties.

["We hope that we can realize this objective, Hull said. He refused to discuss any details as to how fighting can be stopped. He said Egypt and the United States are trying hard to end the fighting."]

AL-AHRAM Urges Sudan To 'Return to Logic'

NC2505071794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0610 GMT 25 May 94

[Text] Cairo, 25 May (MENA)—AL-AHRAM says the Sudanese Government, through its illogical measures against Egypt and its illegal confiscation of Egyptian property in Sudan, proves that it does not have the required level of political thinking and that it is exploiting Egypt's obvious tolerance, patience, and rational reaction to such measures.

The paper stresses in its editorial today that Egypt does not want to add a new crisis to those already experienced by the Arabs or erupting in their faces occasionally. Egypt believes that the Sudanese measures, although tactless, are too small and trivial to cause a serious crisis between Cairo and Khartoum.

This being so, the paper adds, the Sudanese Government should realize that Egypt's silence does not stem from weakness, its patience does not reflect a lack of will, and its failure to retaliate does not proceed from fear.

AL-AHRAM calls on the Sudanese Government to return to logic and understand the truth of Egypt's position and policy so that it may not take similar unwise and shortsighted measures in future.

The paper also urges the government in Khartoum to learn from the experience of insensible people here and there in the Arab world, which suffers the consequences of the foolish policies pursued by some of its leaders.

Khartoum Summons Egyptian Ambassador

NC2505072394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0650 GMT 25 May 94

[Text] Khartoum, 25 May (MENA)—The Sudanese Foreign Ministry summoned Egyptian Ambassador to Sudan Dr. Hasan Jad-al-Haqq late last night to inform him of its protest over the two statements the Egyptian Foreign Ministry issued in reaction to the Sudanese authority's closure of some Egyptian establishments and homes in Sudan last Friday.

The Sudanese ministry claimed that these measures were within the context of enforcing the new Sudanese law on rents.

Mubarak Marks OAU's 31st Anniversary

NC2505105294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0920 GMT 25 May 94

[Text] Addis Ababa, 25 May (MENA)—Current OAU Chairman President Husni Mubarak has stated that if the African continent's struggle was designed to resist foreign powers that occupied the continent, the crucial issue that imposes itself today is to seek solutions for the inherent economic and social problems that hamper the continent's march toward a better future.

In a message he gave today to mark the 31st anniversary of the OAU's establishment in 1963, President Mubarak pointed to the achievements, particularly the Abuja agreement on setting up the African Economic Group, which guided Africa's first step toward economic integration.

The president affirmed that this achievement will leave its mark on economic activity on both the regional and global levels.

In his message, President Mubarak emphasized that the political achievement was made during the recent African summit in Cairo in 1993, which ratified the Cairo Declaration on setting up a mechanism to resolve African disputes within the framework of the OAU through dialogue and reconciliation.

He added that the third achievement was represented in the triumph of wisdom and political will in South Africa; a triumph that resulted in the establishment of the first democratic, nonracist government. He remarked that this government came to reflect the will of most South Africans after three centuries of struggle.

Mubarak referred to other African achievements, represented in the pursuit of democracy and pluralism in most African states. He remarked that these two things are bound to enhance stability and create a favorable climate for the continent's economic development.

As current OAU chairman, President Mubarak said that in spite of the political and economic achievements in 1994, some African inhabitants persist in the obstinacy they developed as a result of bloody domestic wars and disputes. He referred in that context to deteriorating conditions in Somalia, Rwanda, and Burundi in addition to other problems facing Angola, Liberia, and other states.

Islamic Group Denies Attacking Copts

NC2405152494 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 17 May 94 p 7

[Text] The Islamic Group has dismissed recent charges by the Egyptian Human Rights Organization saying it had killed eight Christians in Asyut over the past four months.

The Islamic Group issued a statement saying that killing Copts is not its objective, adding that security authorities have always tried to raise accusations against it to conceal the facts and their incompetence at identifying the real criminals. The security authorities' objective is to distort the image of the Islamic Group in Egypt and abroad, it added.

The Islamic Group said that it is concerned with the issue of the Copts and that the Copts' rights, which were approved by Islam, will be respected at present and in future.

Security Forces Announce Anti-'Extremist' Campaign

NC2405191594 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 17 May 94 p 7

[Report by 'Ala' al-Bahhar]

[Text] The security service departments will launch wide-scale campaigns over the next two weeks in an attempt to arrest many members of the militant extremist groups. The security departments estimate the number of group members at 5,000.

A ranking security official has told AL-SHA'B that in the next stage the security service will step up armed confrontation in Asyut. He said a timetable had been drawn up by the interior ministry to liquidate the leaders of the extremist groups inside and outside the prisons. He added that the armed confrontation operations will last for a while. He admitted that the security service has failed to properly monitor the militant elements within the extremist groups.

The official said that the interior ministry had covered up this failure by announcing that 98 leading extremists were captured even though most of them were detained arbitrarily. Some of the detainees now in custody of the state security intelligence will appear on television and in the papers and be repentant as former members of extremist groups.

The security official added that the announcement on the latest organization was prompted by the political leadership to confront the activities of the lawyers association, which is calling for an investigation into the killing of lawyer 'Abd-al-Harith Madani. The interior ministry has said that Madani was a link between the Islamic Group's leaders inside and outside the prisons.

Yemen

Salih Receives Cable From al-Bid's 'Private Guard'

JN2405174094 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council and supreme commander of the Armed Forces, has received a cable from the officers, NCO's, and soldiers of the (?al-Khurafi) camp, who used to be called the private guard of traitor 'Ali Salim al-Bid. The cable voices the congratulations of the officers, noncommissioned officers [NCO's], and soldiers to the brother leader president and supreme commander of the Armed Forces on the occasion of the blessed 'Id al-Adha and the fourth national anniversary of the Republic of Yemen and also expresses support for the forces of unity and legitimacy.

The cable condemns what was done by the gang of apostasy and secession in the Yemeni Socialist Party, led by traitor 'Ali Salim al-Bid, namely, the declaration of secession. stressing that it is considered high treason against the homeland, the unity, and the Yemeni people and that history will not forgive that gang's crimes against the people and the homeland. The officers, NCO's, and soldiers in the al-Khurafi camp expressed their great appreciation for the step the leadership has taken under brother Lit. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to preserve the homeland's unity and safeguard its gains, which were achieved for our people under the immortal Yemeni revolution. They also stressed their determination to defend unity under the Republic of Yemen.

Salih Receives Support Message From Saddam Husayn

JN2405125094 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, today received brother Dr. Muhsin Khalil, ambassador of the fraternal Republic of Iraq, who handed a message to the brother president from his brother Iraqi President Saddam Husayn dealing with the fraternal relations between the two countries, as well as current developments in our country.

The message stresses the support of the brothers in Iraq for Yemeni unity as a pan-Arab gain that should be preserved and safeguarded from all challenges.

The brother president expressed his appreciation for the brothers in Iraq and for all the other brothers and friends, who have voiced their great eagerness to support the march of unity, democracy, and stability in our country.

Salih Receives King Fahd Reply Cable on 'Id

JN2505054294 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0330 GMT 25 May 94

[Text of cable from Saudi King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, to Presidential Council Chairman 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih—date not given]

[Text] His Excellency brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman, Sanaa: I received your congratulations and those of your brothers in the Presidential Council of the fraternal Yemeni people on the occasion of the blessed 'Id al-Adha. I congratulate you on this blessed occasion and ask God Almighty that we all celebrate this occasion next year while enjoying continued happiness and the fraternal Yemeni people and the Islamic nation prosperity and success. Many happy returns.

[Signed] Your brother, Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques and king of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Ba'th Party Statement Denounces 'Secessionist Crime'

JN2405155494 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1519 GMT 24 May 94

["Unscheduled announcement"]

[Text] The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party has denounced the secessionist crime perpetrated by the misguided group dominating the [Yemeni] Socialist Party [YSP].

A statement issued by the Yemen Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party says: Our people and all their good forces have always pinned and are still pinning their hopes on the unionist current in the YSP to do something for the sake of beloved Yemen in order to entrench the Yemeni unity, adhere to constitutional legitimacy, confront secession, and to issue a principled reply to what has been declared by certain leaders dominating the YSP, and what they have called the separation of the southern and eastern governorates from the Republic of Yemen.

The statement adds: Remaining silent over this is considered a historic crime. Our Yemeni people will never forgive those who are now standing idle and are just watching this crime.

Al-Bid Blames Salih for Formation of Republic

EA2405182194 Aden Democratic Republic of Yemen Radio in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, chairman of the Presidential Council and secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party, has stressed that 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih imposed an unjust war on us, and secession on the entire Yemeni people on 27 April 1994, when he declared war on everyone. He said that we found ourselves compelled,

in overwhelming circumstances, to announce the formation of the Democratic Republic of Yemen, which we consider to be the nucleus for a unified Yemen, as it was erected on the firm basis of the pledge and accord document, a document for national consensus. The brother chairman of the Presidential Council stated this today during a dawn press conference in al-Mukalla, Hadramawt Governorate, during which he touched on a number of important national issues.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid said that the situation which the military and dictatorial machine of the al-Ahmar family's gang is trying to impose would not gain a foothold in this governorate. He noted that 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih was trying, with his forces deployed over a wide area, to turn the situation in his favor, and to besiege Aden, but he had paid a dear price and was continuing to do so. The brother said: It is now up to us to step up resistance, together with all patriots and democrats in the northern governorates, to bring about the collapse of the al-Ahmar gang's military machine, and with it the collapse of its [word indistinct] and hegemony over Yemen's resources and people.

He stressed that the reconstruction of the state in part of Yemen's territory places before us a great task for the future, and a historic responsibility to struggle to bring about the unity of the Yemeni homeland and people. He said: We are not afraid of being termed secessionists or unionists, because history will describe us as individuals seeking to bring about realistic circumstances for the performance of democratic, unionist, and peaceful actions for the future of the entire Yemeni people.

Al-Bid on Recognition of New Republic, Other Issues

EA2505112594 Aden Democratic Republic of Yemen Radio in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Presidential Council Chairman 'Ali Salim al-Bid has stressed that Yemenis will put an end to military and tribal hegemony. To do this, they have two options: Either to accept the authority of the military establishment backed by the gangs, or resist in order to impose democracy, political pluralism, and human rights. We have chosen the latter path and have paid a heavy price out of the conviction that our Yemeni masses understand the situation and realize that our struggle is for the sake of Yemen—not just for the sake of the six southern governorates. We are paying dearly, with our lives and blood, on behalf of those who have not joined us in the battle for the national cause.

Replying to a question on the military situation, 'Ali Salim al-Bid said: We are currently arranging our affairs within the framework of our state and its institutions. We are currently working with the institutions of the Democratic Republic of Yemen as opposed to those of the Yemeni Socialist Party. 'Ali Salim al-Bid noted that the political Army and the military Army are coordinating on a large scale. He referred to the confusion that existed in the initial days of the war, saying it was only natural because we had not conditioned our masses to be warlike and destructive, but that when our units started being attacked in the northern governorates, the logic of reality and struggle took over and gave rise to a different orientation. The people began adapting themselves to the new circumstances.

Presidential Council Chairman 'Ali Salim al-Bid said: We have begun in practical terms what we have been talking about and what we have been demanding in part of Yemen for the sake of the whole of Yemen. It is up to us to compete on a basis of peace and democracy in order to provide an example acceptable to the Yemeni people, a model for the future of the modern civil state based on pluralism, democracy, and human rights. He noted that if there exists a state in the northern governorates proceeding along these same lines, there will be no difficulty in reuniting in the future on the same basis as that on which we agreed in the pledge and accord document.

Referring to the issue of the recognition of the new Republic, 'Ali Salim al-Bid stressed that the coincidence of the declaration of the new Republic with the 'Id al-Adha festival has positive implications that will soon become apparent, God willing. He said contacts made before and during the war with the presidents and kings of the Arab states arose from our eagerness to prevent the disaster of war. The presidents and kings were sympathetic toward our complicated situation which [words indistinct] force.

On the military situation in al-Anad, 'Ali Salim al-Bid stressed that the enemy forces there will be unable to accomplish anything, that good progress is being made there, and that the enemy forces will never be permitted to take al-Anad. He invited reporters to go to the base and the area as a whole to see that for themselves.

On the military situation in Shabwah Governorate, the Presidential Council chairman confirmed that there is indeed a current breakthrough in the direction of the Ma'rib because we did not think they were bent on occupation. He added that the Sanaa forces have been unable to achieve their desire, which is to gain control of the oil wells, because the sons of the Shabwah Governorate have rejected anything like occupation.

The Presidential Council Chairman stressed that our [word indistinct] alliance with the various parties toward building the Yemeni state is an ongoing target and all obstacles in the way of achieving it in the future will be overcome. Everyone is bound to consider the views of others so that we can build an institutional state. We are eager to offer our hands to others and to promote joint action.

Replying to a question on the provision of guarantees for the security of oil companies working in our country, the Presidential Council chairman stressed that the new state will guarantee the interests of all oil companies in our country and will provide them with security and stability regardless of cost inasmuch as there exist joint

interests between the new state and these companies. He said there are good contacts with the international oil companies which have responded positively.

Al-Bid Courts Awkali Tribe's Support, Fighters

NC2405170794 Paris AFP in English 1601 GMT 24 May 94

[By Henri Mamarbachi]

[Text] Al-Mukalla, Yemen, May 24 (AFP)—Southern leader 'Ali Salim al-Bid has gathered tribal leaders in this port city to seek their support for his outnumbered army against the northern troops of Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih.

Al-Bid was focusing on the Awkali tribe's 20,000 fighters to help check Salih's advance in the oil province of Shabwah, in eastern Yemen like al-Mukalla, an AFP correspondent reported Tuesday [24 May].

But the tribe was undecided, mainly because of "bad relations" with al-Bid's Yemen Socialist Party which ruled the former Marxist South Yemen, southern official Muhsin Muhammad Farid acknowledged.

Farid was named deputy prime minister of the Yemen Democratic Republic (YDR) which declared its independence on Saturday under the leadership of al-Bid, who moved here from his Aden stronghold a week ago.

"The tribes need time to realise that the situation has changed, and to rally. They have steered clear of the war since it broke out" on May 5, Farid told a small group of reporters.

"So they are not budging, and they say what's going on does not concern them."

The Awkalis' reluctance to fight is obvious at the Hadhramut Hotel where 1,000 fighters, armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles and traditional carved daggers, are being housed and fed during the negotiations with al-Bid.

Sitting on a rock next to his bungalow in the newly-built hotel facing the Gulf of Aden, one of the fighters bursts into laughter when asked what he will do. And then he says: "Resist, of course."

The civil war and the tribal invasion have caused distress for the staff.

"Last month, the occupancy rate was 82 percent. French, Italian and German tourists filled the hotel. Now we've just received a cancellation for a group of 120 French people," complained hotel manager Isma'il Zakariya, an Indian.

He has not heard from his family in Bangalore for the past 20 days, as al-Mukalla is totally cut off from the rest of the world, with telephone and telex lines down.

"I just want to save my skin, and get away from this place on the first evacuation," he said.

Six ships were moored off al-Mukalla port, the closest loading facility to Massila oilfield. The 175,000 inhabitants of the city appeared indifferent to the battles raging hundred of kilometers away.

Northern forces have made a "breakthrough" in the oil-rich Shabwah but will never reach the production fields, al-Bid said Monday. Oil production was continuing in the Massila field at more than 150,000 barrels a day.

He said negotiations were underway with the Canadian oil company Canoxy on revenues, which were usually paid to the government in Sanaa, capital of the Yemen which was unified four years ago.

Al-Bid Holds Phone Conversations With Arab Leaders

EA2405210094 Aden Democratic Republic of Yemen Radio in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, chairman of the Presidential Council, held telephone conversations today with His Excellency Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, His Majesty King Fahd Bin 'Abd-al-Aziz, custodian of the two holy places, and His Majesty Shaykh Zayid bin Sultan al-Nahayyan, the president of the UAE. During these conversations, the brother chairman of the Presidential Council dwelt on political developments in Yemen and the country's military situation.

Ali Nasir Muhammad Rejects Post, Secession

PM2405155994 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 May 94 p3

[Report by Salwa al-Ustuwani: " 'Ali Nasir Rejects the New State in the South and Urges Cancellation of the Secession and Resumption of Dialogue"]

[Excerpts] Damascus—'Ali Nasir Muhammad, former south Yemeni president, has confirmed the statement made by 'Abdallah Ahmad Ghanim, the Yemeni justice minister in the Sanaa government, to the effect that 'Ali Salim al-Bid had telephoned 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, who lives in Damascus, and offered him the post of vice president in the Democratic Republic of Yemen which was declared three days ago, on the basis that al-Bid would resign six months later and 'Ali Nasir Muhammad would become head of state.

President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that he rejected the offer which he saw as tantamount to partition of Yemen which would be "a crime against unity." He added: "They tried to persuade me by all means in three contacts. I told them that I could not accept." He said that " 'Ali Salim al-Bid offered to send today—that is immediately—a special plane to take me to him in Hadramaut. I refused and told

him that I was prepared to return on certain conditions. The first was restoration of unity. And I said that I would be willing to work for a cease-fire and a return to dialogue and prevent the country's destruction. I asked him to postpone everything for 48 hours, not to make any decisions, and revoke south Yemen's secession decision and return to dialogue and a cease-fire, and said that I would be willing to hold contacts with Sanaa and Aden to promote dialogue and understanding."

'Ali Nasir Muhammad added: "I rejected al-Bid's offer because I care about Yemen's unity and because I still maintain my principled position stated before and after these events, namely that I am opposed to infighting and secession. I emphasized in all their contacts with me and my contacts with them that the Yemeni solution must be within the framework of the unity state not outside it, that whatever the problems and mistakes encountered throughout the unity march, they did not justify secession at all, and that a distinction should be made between disagreement with the Yemeni president and the cause of Yemen's unity. Individuals disappear but unity and the people live on." [passage omitted]

Asked what he thought were the chances of survival for south Yemen's secession, he said "I can confirm that the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] played a significant part, along with the other political groups and the General People's Congress [GPC], in achieving unity, that the YSP derived its strength from its support for unity, and that abandoning unity now would mean suicide and would mean the end of the party." [passage omitted]

President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad said that he did not know if the Gulf states or any state had any intention of recognizing the new south Yemeni state. He said they would have to think hard before taking such a step.

Commenting on (north) Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's position on what has happened, 'Ali Nasir Muhammad said: "In a telephone conversation I had with President Salih yesterday, he assured me that he would never accept the secession which is considered as high national treason, that there would be no going back on unity, that he would not accept the secession of the south as a fait accompli, and that he was prepared to hold a dialogue with the YSP or with the unionist forces within the YSP to rescue Yemen and its unity. I, in turn, stressed to him the need for a dialogue with the unionist forces in the YSP and asked him to keep the door open for dialogue despite the wounds."

The former Yemeni president also said: "I am now endeavoring and trying, along with some of the people who support unity and who are loyal to the Yemeni people, to promote such a dialogue between President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and the YSP. That is what I am working for in my current contacts."

Asked if Arab mediation has been suspended, he said: "There is no Arab mediation. There is Arab League mediation. Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has, in a telephone conversation, assured me that 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has left the door open for dialogue with the Arab League and the Arab states."

On the reports claiming that a number of his supporters including the newly appointed Defense Minister 'Abd-Rabbuh Hadi Mansur, Social Security Minister Muhammad 'Abdallah al-Batani, and Colonel al-Khadr al-'Aqil, were killed in a car accident, giving rise to widespread speculations, 'Ali Nasir Muhammad said: "That is not true. I contacted them a short while ago and spoke to them personally and reassured myself about their health. What was published about them having been killed is not true. They are alive and well."

The former Yemeni president showed annoyance at the appointment of Sulayman Nasir Mas'ud, formerly one of his supporters, as a member of the southern Presidential Council. He said: "I have nothing to do with that appointment or with him. I was not consulted. As a matter of principle I reject the secession and I naturally reject his appointment. It is not just a question of rejecting the appointment. I reject the whole idea. He does not represent me and I have nothing to do with him." [passage omitted]

Southern Vice President Says 'Aden Is Safe'

BR2505101794 Rome LA REPUBBLICA in Italian 25 May 94 p 16

[Interview with South Yemen Vice President 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Jifri by "m. ans." in Aden; date not given: "We Will Never Surrender, We Will Fight One Street at the Time"—first paragraph is LA REPUBBLICA introduction]

[Text] Aden—A huge sapphire ring on his finger, his red and white kaffiyeh elegantly resting on his shoulders, 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Jifri stroked his short, square beard. Yesterday he was elected South Yemen's vice president—and ever since head of state al-Bid took refuge in his native Hadramut region, in the east, al-Jifri has become the highest political authority in Aden. Before starting the interview, al-Jifri—who is 55 years old, and a long-standing member of Yemen's Socialist Party—checked that the telephones were not bugged. Finally, he lifted one himself, looked underneath, and said: "No bugs, we can begin."

[LA REPUBBLICA] Doctor al-Jifri, the war between North and South Yemen broke out after a union which lasted barely four years. What has come between Sanaa and Aden?

[Al-Jifri] The problem is Salih. At a certain point, the northern leader took it into his head to control everything and everybody, establishing definite hierarchies. They have a certain system and they want to bring it here, but this is impossible because we have a democratic orientation and we do not accept impositions from anybody. Apart from that, we know Salih well: You cannot trust anything he says. He tells heaps of lies. Breaking the cease-fire is a blatant example...

[LA REPUBBLICA] However, you also broke the cease-fire by firing a Scud into Sanaa.

[Al-Jifri] We did not fire any missiles.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Who was it, then?

[Al-Jifri] I repeat, we did not break the cease-fire.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Doctor al-Jifri, what then is the military situation around your al-'Anad air base?

[Al-Jifri] The situation is excellent. We had a few problems in the beginning. They took the initiative first, and we responded.

[LA REPUBBLICA] However, there was then a partial withdrawal on your part...

[Al-Jifri] This was purely tactical. In fact, our move took them by surprise, and now the southern area is entirely in our hands. They are still shelling us from the north.

[LA REPUBBLICA] What distance are the northerners from Aden?

[Al-Jifri] Sixty kilometers. However, we recently destroyed one of their trucks, blocked eight of their tanks. In short, we chased them back beyond the mountains. Aden is safe, no problem there.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Let us suppose, for a minute, that the north manages to close in, aiming to conquer Aden...

[Al-Jifri] They are incapable of that. The people will fight, fight, fight. This is the key point.

[LA REPUBBLICA] However, war is not simply a matter of will.

[Al-Jifri] We have a just cause to defend our country. And we will do so, if need be, one street at the time, one house at the time. Furthermore, we have new, fresh forces joining us all the time.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Meaning conscripts, rounded up and sent to the front.

[Al-Jifri] No, they are militiamen, in short, reservists. They need a couple of days' training and then, indeed, they do go to the front.

[LA REPUBBLICA] What steps are you taking at international level to try to put an end to this war?

[Al-Jifri] We are striving to obtain other nations' full consensus, and many of them have requested the northern leaders to stop. But if the latter do not, what can we do? Salih does not at all mind killing civilians, he only wants money and power.

[LA REPUBBLICA] How do you think the situation will now develop?

[Al-Jifri] I believe our Yemen is here to stay, and that it will become a modern state. We are convinced of this. I do not believe the people in the north will accept that corrupt regime which has divided the country and caused so much suffering.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Do you see in all this the possibility of a diplomatic solution, or rather the continuation of war?

[Al-Jifri] I believe in diplomatic means to achieve peace. But if diplomacy does not work, there are other means of achieving peace.

Al-'Attas' To Form New Republic's Cabinet

JN2405160994 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1545 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Damascus, 24 May (SANA)—Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, who is entrusted with forming a cabinet in the Democratic Republic of Yemen which was declared in Aden, has denied the downfall of any city in the south. He stressed that no party has achieved victory over the other in the raging war.

In an interview with Radio L'Orient today, al-'Attas, who is now in London, said that he will leave for Aden soon to form a cabinet and to hold further consultations with the brothers in Aden.

Concerning President 'Ali Salim al-Bid's presence in Hadhramaut, al-'Attas said that Mr. al-Bid is inspecting some troops there.

Al-'Attas said: We should work to stop the shedding of more blood and to save what remains of the Yemeni national resources.

Southerners Examine Cease-Fire Offer From Sanaa

PM2405161594 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 May 94 p1

[Reports by 'Abdallah Hammudah in London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureaus in Sanaa and Aden, and Sawsan Abu-Husayn in Cairo: "Yemeni Initiative To End the Fighting Between the Two Sides"]

[Excerpt] The leadership of the Democratic Republic of Yemen in al-Mukalla and Aden yesterday studied an initiative from the Sanaa leadership offering a cease-fire in return for a cancellation of the declaration of a state in southern Yemen without any other conditions such as the conditions previously laid down by Sanaa about surrender and trial of what it described as the "mutineers" in the leadership of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP].

As speculations continued all day yesterday about the likely reaction of the southern command, observers said that the aim of Sanaa's initiative was to "try to block international recognition of the new republic which the southerners, faced with President 'Ali Salih's intransigence, were forced to declare as a last resort to save

whatever they can after the failure to reach understanding within the context of unity."

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that Salim Salih Muhammad, member of the Yemeni Presidential Council in the unified state and of the southern Presidential council; 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, former south Yemeni president; Shaykh Mujahid Abu-Shawarib, deputy prime minister in the unified state; and Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah, all participated in drafting the initiative which was promptly accepted by President Salih. A high-ranking source said "we are waiting to see what develops from that."

The initiative of the Yemeni figures came as all parties were trying to contain the situation by promoting a cease-fire. Some sources, however, have emphasized that the southern leadership is now laying down two conditions before it considers any move on its part. The first: a cease-fire on all fronts; and the second: the return of all the southern units now in northern Yemen to the south and withdrawal of all northern units that are now in the south to the north.

It is not known if Sanaa would now accept these conditions. [passage omitted]

YSP Official Outlines Initiative To End Fighting

NC2405211794 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2026 GMT 24 May 94

[Interview with Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dali, head of the Political and Foreign Relations Department of the Yemeni Socialist Party, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] You were with us when we heard our colleague Mamduh Sa'd's interview with Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani. What is your response and how can the ongoing conflict in Yemen be contained?

[Al-Dali] Actually I believe that the starting point in resolving the worsening crisis represented by this ferocious war should be an immediate halt to the war. Afterward, we could disengage the forces and then sit and talk about anything or any issue.

[Correspondent] How can the fighting be stopped amid these reports and statements by the two sides?

[Al-Dali] The aggressor should order a halt to his aggressions against the southern and eastern governorates. The aggressor must stop his aggressions against the eastern and southern governorates. We have agreed on more than one occasion to halt the fighting and to accept mediation efforts, and to sit down for talks with our brothers, but the other side has refused and rejected more than one initiative to halt the fighting. He, the aggressor, has to stop the fighting.

[Correspondent] President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih is very strongly opposed to your declaration of secession from unity.

[Al-Dali] We did not choose to proclaim a new state in the southern and eastern governorates at our own choosing; there were reasons and motives that prompted us to do so.

[Correspondent] In a few words, what would you say about the YSP's initiative?

[Al-Dali] An immediate cease-fire, withdrawing and disengaging the forces, and sitting down for talks without preconditions.

Sanaa Reports Casualty Toll From Scud Missiles

JN2405185694 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1715 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] A security official from the office of the mayor of Sanaa, the capital, has reported that the casualty toll from the Scud missile fired yesterday evening by the renegade, secessionist gang in the Socialist Party leadership has reached 120 people killed or wounded, mostly women and children. The missile fell in a densely populated residential neighborhood. Rescue teams are still searching for survivors believed to be buried under the rubble of the four houses that were leveled. Numerous houses across a wide radius around the bombing site also suffered substantial damage.

The missile, which hit one of the poorer districts of Sanaa, was the 23d to target the capital since the war was triggered by al-Bid and his separatist coterie. This is in addition to those that were launched on other civilian installations and the population in Ta'izz, al-Hudaydah, al-Makha, and the Rahidah Hospital.

The source indicated that the horrific and murderous action killed or wounded newborns and caused miscarriages. The victims included a physician whose fingers on his right hand were blown off while on duty at a nearby hospital.

The security source condemned the action as a treacherous, gruesome crime. He also condemned the traitor al-Bid's threat at a news conference of further Scud missile attacks at innocents and civilian establishments in Sanaa and other Yemeni cities. This kind of threat, the source said, shows that al-Bid and his secessionist band are consumed with such hate that they will not hesitate to perpetrate the most gruesome of crimes against defenseless innocents comparable to their atrocities against the homeland and its unity.

Aden Reports Northern Forces Chased Over 'Border'

EA2405203994 Aden Democratic Republic of Yemen Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 May 94

["Military communique"; place and date not given]

[Excerpt] A responsible military source from the western command of the Kharaz/Bab al-Mandeb front has confirmed that all attacking enemy units have received a

final coup de grace, along with their military equipment, which they tried to (?keep) within the borders of the Democratic Republic of Yemen. The source said in a press statement that in the course of their battle operations last night and this morning, our forces succeeded in repulsing the attacking forces, destroying them, and chasing their remnants across the border of the Democratic Republic of Yemen. Our forces captured and destroyed large quantities of military materiel. In his statement, the source gave details and types of the military material captured, saying they included 15 tanks, a number of BM-21 Katyusha rocket launchers, various field guns, military vehicles, various kinds of communications equipment, and large numbers of night vision apparatus. Several tons of ammunition, small arms, and war materiel were also captured.

The source reported that the sands of the desert had received thousands of dead and wounded from the enemy, from Jihaf to al- Buzah. Many died in the fierce heat of the desert, due to shortages of supplies and water.

The source said that the operation to mop up and pursue pockets of resistance was still in progress at the time the preparation of this military communique, stressing that what remained of the enemy's vehicles and his equipment would probably be captured or destroyed. [passages omitted]

Southern Aircraft Attack Northern Forces Near al-'Anad

NC2405212794 London MBC Television in Arabic 2100 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] South Yemen military aircraft have bombarded the northern forces besieging the strategic al-'Anad Base. Contradictary military statements are still being released on the progress of clashes.

Sanaa Military Statement on Battle Operations

JN2505051294 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0330 GMT 25 May 94

[Statement issued by the Ministry of Defense; place and date not given]

[Text] With God's guidance and under His care and with the resolve, steadfastness, and heroism of the brave, the righteous heroes in the valiant Armed Forces units, the forces protecting unity, democracy, and constitutional legitimacy pursue the combat and combing missions they have been tasked to carry out on all axes and in all sectors. They are successfully carrying out these missions which are related to the field operations. These include their staunch confrontation of the sabotage operations to which the gangs of secession and rebellion have resorted as a result of their defeat and the collapse of their dens. These gangs are committing treacherous criminal actions against civilians, populated areas, and against strategic and civilian installations, including attacks on cities with missiles from the air, sea, and land targetting the forces protecting unity and constitutional legitimacy in al-'Alam, Ra's Imran, and Zinjibar city. They sustained further losses in weapons, equipment, and military hardware, and maliciously harmed citizens and their properties.

The air defenses of the forces of unity and constitutional legitimacy shot down one MiG-21 and a helicopter.

The valiant Armed Forces units on the other axes continue to pursue the remnants who flee toward Hadhramaut governorate from the Sbabwah axis and to comb the remaining pockets and dens on the Lahij-Aden axis.

The forces protecting unity, democracy, and constitutional legitimacy continue to carry out their duties with high morale and complete confidence in the proximity of the date when the people will triumph over the enemies of their free, united, dignified, and just life, the agents, criminals and evil traitors in the gang of apostasy and secession within the Yemeni Socialist Party command, God willing.

Radio Reports French Statement of Support for Unity

JN2405175494 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] France, through its foreign minister, has expressed its concern for the preservation of Yemeni unity. Asked by a Cairo radio correspondent about France's stand on the developments in Yemen, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said: As a general rule, France believes that the Yemen unity, rather than secession, constitutes a factor of stability. Therefore, we prefer that Yemen unity is respected.

Kurdish Forces Report Casualties Inflicted on PUK

LD2405204594 Tehran IRNA in English 2012 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Mahabad (West Azerbaijan Prov.), May 24, IRNA—Iraq's Kurdish Revolutionary Hizballah forces killed 17 attackers of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] in Chuman and Galaleh regions over the past two days of fighting in northeastern Iraq.

According to a Kurdish Revolutionary Hizballah spokesman here Tuesday [24 May] two combatants of the Kurdish Islamic forces also lost their lives as a result of clashes with Jalal Talabani's PUK. The source said another 11 PUK forces also were shot dead in an attack by Hizballah in the Be'erge and Qasruk regions.

In related news from the Iranian city of Sanandaj, 11 PUK forces were killed by the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan (IMK) which managed to capture Sirvan camp, 5 kms off Halabja-Suleymaniya route on Monday.

A source close to IMK said its forces also succeeded in gaining control of the strategic Hiro village in Qal'e Dizeh of Suleymaniya in an attack made on PUK positions over the past two days.

The source said 15 other PUK forces, including PUK commander, Hassan Rasul Omar, were killed in two other attacks.

Earlier, PUK had acknowledged the death of Hassan Kavestani, one of its top members who fell in the battle with IMK forces a couple. [sentence as received]

Kurdish Party Chief Talabani Interviewed

PM2405092794 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 May 94 p4

[Telephone interview with PUK Secretary General Jalal Talabani in Damascus, by 'Adnan Husayn in London; date not given]

[Text] Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] who is currently in the Syrian capital Damascus, has stated that "foreign interventions" had fuelled the fighting between his party and the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] led by Mas'ud Barzani. In a telephone interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, he said that he wanted to return to his headquarters in Irbil to contribute to the efforts to bring about a cease-fire and normalize the situation in the Iraqi Kurdish areas.

At the beginning of the interview he emphasized that calm has returned to these areas after Friday's [20 May] agreement between his party and Barzani's party. Following is the text of the interview.

[Husayn] What are your expectations? Will that calm continue or will it collapse again?

[Talabani] I am very hopeful that the agreements reached by our two parties will be implemented and that security will again prevail in Kurdistan. It is now clear that resolving issues by military means is neither possible nor useful. It only serves the enemies of the Kurdish people. The illusions of those who thought that they could force the PUK into anything have been shattered and it has been proved on the ground that that is impossible.

[Husayn] The question now is this: How could fighting have gone on for three weeks despite several agreements reached to stop it and despite the fact that all parties realize that the fighting is against the interests of the Kurdish people who are the losers in any case? Does it mean that the Kurdish leadership is incapable of controlling the situation or that at least one of the two parties, for some ulterior motives, does not want the fighting to stop?

[Talabani] What has happened was not just infighting between brothers. It was against the Kurdish people and their real interests; against the Iraqi people, the Iraqi opposition, and the Kurdistan Front; against the real interests of both the KDP and the PUK. It only serves the Baghdad regime. The PUK is not responsible for the continuation of the fighting. We have tried to stop the fighting since the first agreement but foreign intervention fuelled the fighting. Three attacks were launched from inside Iran with the participation of Islamists and some other brothers who had forgotten the disadvantages of cooperating with the foreigner. That caused complications. The outbreak of fighting in one area causes repercussions in another. Today I contacted my colleagues and reaffirmed to them the need for observing a cease-fire and adhering to the agreements reached in that connection. I warned against foreign plots to foment sedition and I urged them not to respond to provocations and to overlook them if necessary in the interest of internal peace.

[Husayn] Do you have any material evidence of foreign intervention?

[Talabani] Yes, our evidence is that the attacking forces came from beyond the borders and were seen by everyone. Some officials of the United Nations and humanitarian organizations operating in Kurdistan went to Halabjah and saw with their own eyes how artillery shells and missiles were fired from there. Some ammunition boxes were also left behind. Local inhabitants who were forced to leave these areas testified to officials of the United Nations and humanitarian organizations that they saw foreigners participating in the fighting.

[Husayn] Some people wonder why you have remained abroad. They believe that an early return to the region by you would possibly have changed many things in favor of stopping the fighting in the first few days.

[Talabani] I am grateful to the people who say that my presence inside would have improved the situation. That is a great honor. The truth is that on the first day of the

fighting I sent a cable to brother Mas'ud Barzani authorizing him to head the political bureaus of both parties and to try to calm the situation and stop the infighting, but when the fighting spread, Brother Barzani contacted me and said that there was a need for me to be there. So we agreed that we would make efforts to secure my return by air via Turkey or by land via Syria provided Brother Barzani, Brother Ahmad al-Jalabi (chairman of the Executive Council of the opposition's National Congress), and others are present in the border area to ensure my safe return, particularly as in the areas of Bahdinan [as transliterated] (in the Dahuk Governorate through which passes the road to Irbil) there are many members of gangs which take their orders from the Iraqi regime. You must remember that several partisan figures where killed there by these gangs, including an official of the Communist Party, an Assyrian member of the parliament of Kurdistan, a member of the Political Bureau of the Kurdistan Toilers Party, and some of our colleagues and officials from the two parties. There were also several attacks on UN officials there. That is why it was necessary to take precautionary measures to ensure safe return. I personally have cancelled several important foreign engagements to expedite my return, including a visit to Japan, a visit to Australia, and a visit to Cyprus to attend minorities conferences. I cancelled these programs and went to Damascus in order to return to Kurdistan. I was accompanied by Iraqi National Congress [INC] leading members. Regrettably, however, the brothers did not come to the borders as agreed. We made efforts with the allies to secure our return by air but they informed us that after (last month's) incident in which two U.S. helicopters were shot down by two U.S. military aircraft, helicotper movements have been restrict and the only possibility was to secure my arrival in Zakhu (near the border with Turkey), but that was not enough as far as I was concerned. I also made efforts with Turkey and Iran for the same purpose. I must say that I am not the only member of the PUK leadership who is abroad. There are five other leadership members and our return is important not only as far as the fighting is concerned but it is also important for our party's work at this stage.

[Husayn] So when do you expect to return?

[Talabani] Before the end of this month, I hope. We have taken certain measures for that purpose but I cannot reveal them now. It may be useful to tell you that I am in constant and direct contact with Kurdistan by telephone and radio, and I am following the situation hour by hour and I talk to my colleagues there five to 10 times a day.

Saddam Launches 'Purge' Against al-Duri Officials

PM2405153194 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 May 94 p 5

[Unattributed report: "Saddam Expels Senior Officials and Military Figures Who Come from 'Izzat al-Duri's Village"]

[Text] London, AL-HAYAH—Iraqi opposition quarters have stressed that President Saddam Husayn has launched a purge campaign among the regime's ranks, focusing on prominent figures, all of whom come from al-Duri (the village of al-Duri is near the village of al-'Awjah in Tikrit, the president's birthplace)—from where 'Izzat al-Duri, his deputy in the presidency, the Armed Forces command, and the ruling Ba'th Party—comes. In a statement distributed in London and a copy of which AL-HAYAH has received, the Free Iraqi Council said that Saddam accused a number of senior officials from al-Duri of conspiring against the regime. They are: Tali' al-Duri, military governor general; 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Duri, director of public security and former member of the Ba'th Party Regional Command, who was in charge of the Mosul organization in the past; Khadr al-Duri, former deputy of former intelligence chief Barzan al-Tikriti, Saddam's half-brother; and Sabir al-Duri, former intelligence chief.

The council's statement said that 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Duri's family has been expelled from its home in the exclusive al-Mansur area, west of Baghdad, and that the house has been turned into offices for one of the Ba'th Party's organizations.

Furthermore, a number of Army officers and party officials have been pensioned off. Some of them are being investigated.

Saddam Receives Well-Wishers on 'Id al-Adha

JN2105181294 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1722 GMT 21 May 94

[Text] Baghdad, 21 May (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has received congratulators on the occasion of the blessed 'Id al-Adha, may it bring welfare and blessings for his excellency, great Iraq, and the Arab and Muslim nation.

Present to extend congratulations to his excellency the president on this happy occasion were 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC]; Taha Yasin Ramadan, vice president; 'Abd-al-Majid al-Rafi'i, Badr-al-Din Muddaththir, and Ilyas Farah, members of the National Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party; Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf, vice president; fighter Staff General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, RCC member and defense minister; Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi and Mizban Khadr Hadi, RCC members; members of the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party; Ahmad Husayn Khudayyir, prime minister; Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi, chief of the Presidential Office; ministers; those who hold the rank of minister; and fighter members of the General Command of the Armed Forces.

President Saddam Husayn thanked the well-wishers, wishing everyone, and through them the children of our great Iraqi people and the glorious Arab nation, continued glory and a prosperous future, God willing.

International Sanctions Said To Take Toll on Regime

PM2405120494 London THE DAILY TELEGRAPH in English 24 May 94 p 12

[Article by Patrick Bishop: "Saddam Losing Grip as Trade Sanctions Bite"]

[Text] Saddam Husayn's iron grip on Iraq may finally be slackening due to unrelenting international sanctions against his regime, according to British and American assessments.

Officials believe that the economic embargo imposed after the invasion of Kuwait is restricting the dictator's ability to buy loyalty and increasing the chances of a successful coup.

Reports of defections by military officers and terrorist attacks in Baghdad against government offices have fuelled speculation that the regime's hold is weakening.

President Bill Clinton's National Security Adviser, Mr Anthony Lake, noted with approval recently that "despite Saddam's efforts to buy loyalties, sanctions are taking their toll on the crucial inner circle on which the regime depends.

"There are now frequent reports of coup attempts and unrest among the relatively privileged Iraqi elite."

Mr Lake went on to say that "these trends could lead to new conditions for the citizens of Iraq and new opportunities to build a more peaceful and normal relationship between Iraq and the outside world"—a coy reference to the possibility of Saddam's overthrow.

The hope that the dictator could be ousted in the not-too-distant future has increased American determination not to slacken the international blockade.

So far, London and Washington have managed to resist pressure in the Security Council to reward Saddam for his more co-operative attitude towards UN inspectors trying to track down his weapons of mass destruction.

The advocates of a less stringent policy are led by Russia, for whom Iraq is a major debtor. But France also has sound economic reasons for softening the line against Saddam.

It had lucrative economic ties with Baghdad before the war, buying Iraqi oil and selling military aircraft. French enterprises are already positioning themselves to be in the best possible position to exploit opportunities once sanctions are lifted.

The Elf Aquitaine and Total oil companies have held extensive talks with the Iraqis over the future exploitation of two fields in southern Iraq where there is an estimated 20-30 billion barrels waiting to be pumped—more than in the North Sea.

The French insist that nothing will be signed until sanctions have been eased or lifted. But their actions have caused anger in London, where they are viewed as undercutting British commercial interests and breaking the spirit of the allied strategy against Saddam.

After initially believing that its interests were best served by leaving a weakened Saddam in place to hold the country together and act as a counterweight to anti-Western Iran, the US has come round to the view that it would be better for Saddam to go.

The US now supports the Iraqi National Congress, the broad spectrum exile organisation which has moved its headquarters to the Kurdish-held north of the country.

Reaction to 'Arafat Decree on Pre-1967 Laws

Correspondent Details Decree

TA2405152694 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Two East Jerusalem papers today carry a decree by PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat which orders that the civilian and religious courts in the areas of the autonomy are to reinstate the laws that prevailed in the territories before June 1967. The PLO Executive Committee will announce the names of the 24 members of the autonomy's Administrative Council tomorrow. Our Arab affairs correspondent Oren Kohen reports:

[Kohen] The decree cancels most of the military laws that pertain to civilian matters, and restores the situation to that which prevailed in the territories before the Israeli occupation. This was stated today by Attorney Furayh Abu-Middayn from Gaza in reaction to a decree PLO head Yasir 'Arafat published today. According to the decree, as of 20 May, the courts in the area of autonomy again follow the laws that existed there before June 1967. 'Arafat published the decree in East Jerusalem newspapers today. He calls on the civilian and religious courts to again function in the manner they did before June 1967. Egypt has not changed the laws that prevailed in Gaza since the days of the British mandate and Israel added military regulations to them. At the same time, the Jordanian law is still valid in Jericho.

The step 'Arafat has taken stands in contradiction to the agreements he signed with Israel, or at least this is the Foreign Ministry's view. The ministry claims that any change made in the laws in the autonomy areas require an a-priori Israeli agreement.

The legal situation in the territories is not yet sufficiently clear because Israel has not yet transferred the administrative powers to the council that 'Arafat was supposed to be name three weeks ago. The PLO Executive Council is slated to announce the final composition of the council tomorrow, assuming that 'Arafat's attempts to nominate them do not fail once again.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1500 GMT on 24 May adds: "Foreign Ministry Legal Adviser Yo'el Singer said today that if indeed 'Arafat announced the cancellation of the laws Israel had applied in the territories, it is a gross violation of the agreement Israel and the PLO signed. 'Arafat's declaration, Singer says, is tantamount to making the entire agreement null and void. The legal adviser told our correspondent Shlomo Raz that 'Arafat has no legislative authority in Gaza and Jericho. Only the Palestinian Authority has such powers, and it has not yet arrived and has not started operating; furthermore, this power as well is subject to an Israeli veto." A similar report by Shlomo Raz on Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1505 GMT on 24 May adds that " 'Arafat's decree is legally meaningless."]

Ministry Declares Decree Invalid

TA2505101994 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE in English 25 May 94

[Statement issued by the Foreign Ministry; date not given]

[Text] In response to media requests for some reaction to the statement issued in the name of the PLO Chairman, yesterday (Tuesday), 24.5.94, in the newspaper "AL-QUDS", the Foreign Ministry Spokesman has said that the statement is meaningless and is invalid. The Spokesman noted that, based on the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, neither Arafat nor the PLO has any legislative power or authority. According to Article VII of the Agreement, this power will be granted to the Palestinian Authority—once it is established and begins operating in the field. Even then, legislation must be enacted in coordination with Israel. Consequently, this statement has no legal validity. All existing military laws and orders remain in force, and are binding on all of the parties.

Foreign Ministry Legal Advisor Yo'el Singer adds that from a legal point-of-view Arafat's statement is a breach of Article VII of the Gaza-Jericho agreement and that if indeed there has been any attempt on Arafat's part to change the situation, it would be invalid. He also noted that 'Oded Ben-Ami, the Defense Minister's Media Advisor, is of a similar opinion.

Peres Dismisses Reports on Law Reversal

TA2505050494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 25 May 94

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister Peres will meet with his U.S. counterpart Warren Christopher in Washington today. Prior to the meeting, Peres said that in the discussions with Damascus, Israel has not yet been given anything tangible.

Peres added that Saudi Arabia has recently adopted a negative attitude. The Saudi Arabian ambassador in Washington, who used to meet with Jewish representatives, has vanished without a trace. Saudi Arabia has also failed to keep its promise to change its position with regard to the Arab boycott. [passage omitted]

The foreign minister dismissed East Jerusalem press reports that 'Arafat has canceled the laws put into force by the military government in the territories.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0405 GMT on 25 May carries a related report from Washington by Arye Golan, adding that "in a meeting with Israeli correspondents yesterday, Peres said that if the supporters of peace among the Palestinians do not seize control of the self-government areas, there will be no point in continuing the negotiations. They should be given a chance to organize themselves in the field, however, Peres said." The report adds that "as for the future, Peres asserted

that the Palestinians prefer to continue the autonomy negotiations immediately in Cairo and not in Washington."]

Beilin: No Need To Get 'Worked Up'

TA2505091794 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 25 May 94

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin by Ya'el Dan and Itay Engel on 25 May; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Dan] Earlier this morning, we spoke with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin about the matter of 'Arafat's decree canceling Israeli laws in the autonomous areas. We started off by asking him whether he agreed with Yo'el Singer, the Foreign Ministry's legal adviser, who reacted yesterday by saying that 'Arafat was behaving as though he has shelved his agreement with Israel and is now doing as he likes.

[Beilin] No, everyone can draw his own analogy. I think that we are essentially dealing with the agreement's first days. There are definitely a lot of problems. There are also a great many hopes. I can say that this agreement has granted the Palestinians many important things they have never had; however, I can also state that Israel has control of all the safety valves. Therefore, I refuse to get worked up about every single act that may constitute a violation of the agreement, because we can ultimately prevent any such violation.

[Engel] Dr. Beilin, in one of your previous interviews to IDF radio in connection to other statements made by 'Arafat, you said that it would be great to have an alternative but, regrettably, although 'Arafat is no Mandela, he is all we have. Our question is whether you consider that to mean that we must always just shrug our shoulders in resignation and plow ahead? Are there any red lines that 'Arafat will cross soon, if he has not crossed them already?

[Beilin] The red line is very clearly written in black ink. It is the agreement itself. We will not accept any violation of the agreement. Any violation will....

[Dan, interrupting] But we have already seen many violations.

[Engel] Does his latest decree not constitute a violation of the agreement?

[Beilin] If it constitutes a violation of the agreement, we will not accept it. What do you mean? Does the fact that he issued a decree mean that it will be implemented? What is the whole agreement about? This agreement really gives us a series of measures by which we can prevent many things from happening if the other side violates the understandings. Therefore, if a situation indeed develops in which the legislation which was previously in force becomes irrelevant.... [pauses] After all, in the meantime, it is just a decree; the question is what happens when it is implemented. We can easily prevent the Palestinians from taking any action to implement the decree.

[Dan] Perhaps the question is more on the psychological level. There is a crisis of confidence between the PLO and Israel. With whom did we sign an agreement? With people who are in such a hurry to violate it?

[Beilin] Well, the psychological aspect is more of an individual matter. Those who had complete confidence in the other side probably feel less comfortable. Since I belong to the camp with low expectations, I do not have complete trust in the other side. You quoted my remarks accurately earlier. It is true that I regard this agreement as more the product of what is possible than of what is ideal. We will have to continuously monitor things step by step and check whether the agreement is being upheld. Each day brings its own problems. At the same time, we must bear in mind that this is the beginning of a very complex and historic stage. It would be stupid to view every single step as being either the end of the agreement or proof of its total success.

[Engel] Perhaps it would be wiser to simply say that whatever 'Arafat said will not be implemented, because people hear his remarks and receive the impression that we are incapable of putting 'Arafat in his place. He continues to issue these statements, and if the Israeli Government treats him like a leader, then it is only natural that people in the street will assume that his decrees will be implemented in the field.

[Beilin] I am not in any way minimizing 'Arafat's leadership of the Palestinian people. I do not take his remarks lightly. I am not proposing that we take his proclamations or actions lightly. I definitely think that we should continue to monitor his statements and actions and take the appropriate action whenever the Palestinians violate the agreement.

Rabin Orders Contingency Plans for Accord Violations

TA2405112994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has instructed the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] to draft contingency plans for possible violations of the agreement with the PLO, Deputy Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. He added that 3,200 Palestinian policemen have so far arrived in Gaza and Jericho, some of them from Sudan and Iraq. Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is not taking part in and is not cooperating with the Palestinian police, he said.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that Major General Shahaq briefed the committee about the investigation of Mustafa al-Dirani, a member of Hizballah in Lebanon, and noted he is a tough nut to crack. The deputy chief of staff assessed that al-Dirani's interrogation will yet continue for a long time.

Rabin Holds News Conference in Gaza Strip

TA2405124094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 24 May 94

[News conference by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin at the Nahal 'Oz checkpoint in the Gaza Strip—live; broadcast in progress]

[Text] ...is linked to this place in the Gaza Strip. Approximately 750,000 or almost 800,000 Palestinians live here with 5,000 Israelis as opposed to the less than 20,000 Palestinians living in the Jericho area that will be under the control of the Palestinian Authority. I would like to start by extending my deepest appreciation to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], the chief of staff, the General Staff; especially to the Southern Command and its commander, staff, division commander; the operation coordinators and their commanders, for the extraordinarily efficient and excellent manner in which the difficult and unique mission of the orderly transfer of control on the ground from the IDF and the other security forces to the Palestinian police and forces—including those issues pertaining to civilian authorities—was completed. I was seriously concerned about the way, form, and order in which these steps had to be carried out because although we are familiar with the IDF and have confidence in it, we had no experience with the other side. As I have learned, a fabric of relations has emerged with regard to the important issues in order to facilitate the evacuation of those parts of the Gaza Strip the IDF withdrew from. This relationship permitted an orderly and adequate transfer process. I think that this constitutes a beginning that gives rise to hope, and gives the Palestinian authorities the chance to translate the just-completed transfer into orderly control, if they indeed make full use of all their abilities as they did during the transfer stage. As far as we are concerned, an important chapter in the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho First agreement has been concluded. I believe it offers the Palestinians a comfortable start. A start that will permit them to fortify their rule and bolster their control over the population. We are especially sensitive to security aspects, both with regard to the security of the Israeli settlers in the settlements inside the Gaza Strip and with regard to all issues relating to the roads used by the settlers either inside the Gaza Strip or leading into Israel; and certainly anything pertaining to the IDF activities in the area or to the borders between the Gaza Strip and Israel's sovereign territory. In my view, the activities, preparations, and implementation as carried out by the IDF are simply worthy of the admiration of the Israeli public and definitely that of the government and of myself as prime minister and defense minister. The Southern Command is indeed worthy of all praise. Thank you.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, it appears that relations in the field between the IDF and the Palestinian Police do not seem particularly rosy. What briefings did you receive at the Southern Command? Can the gaps between the parties be bridged? Can the confusion and uncertainty which is so prevalent here in the Gaza Strip be resolved?

[Rabin] I am sorry to disappoint you. In all that pertains to the transfer of authority, I think that things were coordinated well. Nevertheless, let us not forget that the mechanism stipulated by the agreements is a very complex one of coordinating centers which are already operating. There are joint patrols and information sharing. Any such newly-established mechanism between two parties [two-minute break in transmission]

...serious fears. I would like to say that things have been carried out much better than I expected.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el's Army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe] Are you satisfied with the IDF's new deployment and the security of the settlers?

[Rabin] I think that our plans were drafted as best we could. The forces deployed accordingly, and I believe we will be able to provide maximum security. There is no foolproof [previous word in English] security. The IDF is currently in full control in Judaea and Samaria. A base murder occurred 10 days ago near Bet Hagay. The fact that this area is under our control did not and cannot absolutely prevent terror attacks. Those who think that in the current conditions, before the whole system has stabilized, we can make sure that terror incidents will not occur does not know and does not tell the truth. I am convinced that our deployment and measures, some of which are still under construction...[pauses] We arrived here after driving along part of a fence under construction which will divide between the Gaza Strip and Israeli territory; the construction of other measures is still under way. When all these are operational, they will provide the best security possible. I would like to reiterate that there is no absolute security against a terrorist willing to commit suicide or against individuals willing to perpetrate terrorist attacks.

I would like to add a personal note: I am more than pleased that IDF soldiers are no longer hanging out on the outskirts of Gaza, the alleyways of Jabalyah and al-Shati'. I consider it a great privilege to be part of the government that made the decision to get them out of Gaza.

[Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television's Roni Daniyel] Yesterday, the police minister told the Knesset that if the Palestinians do not abide by all their commitments the whole process would come to a halt. Could you elaborate on this point?

[Rabin] I will clarify our position, as presented by the police minister to the Knesset yesterday on behalf of the government. We expect all sides to the agreement to fully abide by their commitments. A bilateral agreement is based on the premise that it serves the basic interests of both sides. Therefore, our efforts will be aimed at having

all sides abide by their commitments. In spite of Palestinian statements which could be interpreted as a possible violation of the agreement, there will be no unilateral violation. I hope no significant violations will occur. Agreements obviously involve two sides and are based on the premise that each side must abide by its commitments. Otherwise, and I hope this is not the case, Israel definitely has all the means to insist that violations be rectified.

[Indistinct question by unidentified correspondent about incidents in recent days with the Palestinian police, including today's incident in Jericho]

[Rabin] I will first comment on yesterday's incident. In the wake of the killing of two IDF soldiers in the southern part of the Erez checkpoint on Friday, we imposed a full closure on the Gaza Strip and demanded from the Palestinian police to station roadblocks 200 to 300 meters ahead of the IDF roadblock so that they can be responsible for checking every vehicle arriving at an IDF roadblock from the direction of Gaza to confirm that the passengers are not carrying weapons.

Unfortunately, in contravention of instructions and the law, an Israeli vehicle apparently drove into the Gaza Strip yesterday, and then drove back toward the Erez checkpoint. At our demand, the Palestinian police tried to stop the vehicle. When it failed to do so, they aimed their fire at its wheels. Nobody was hurt. In this case, the violation was unequivocally committed by the Israeli vehicle.

As for today's incident in Jericho, I have no accurate information. I will not comment on it until I get a report from the IDF.

[Indistinct question by unidentified correspondent about Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi's announcement yesterday that the PNC, the Palestine National Council, will be holding its session in Gaza to amend the Palestinian Covenant]

[Rabin] Referring to the first part of your question, I do not know what Ahmad al-Tibi's status is—to the best of my knowledge, he is an Israeli citizen—and I am not prepared to vouch for the extent to which he reflects 'Arafat's positions. I only know that the agreement signed in Cairo about the implementation of Gaza-Jericho First includes a passage in which 'Arafat undertakes to abolish those clauses in the Palestinian Covenant contradicting the content of the letters we exchanged, which led to the mutual recognition between the PLO and us, in the first meeting of the PNC and to fulfill all the elements of the Declaration of Principles [DOP]. Whether the PNC will meet in Gaza and when, I have not received any authoritative information about it.

Secondly, in order to go ahead with the implementation of the process beyond Gaza-Jericho First, we will insist that the Palestinians demonstrate their ability to fulfill their commitments in Gaza and Jericho and reaffirm their commitment to the DOP, the Gaza-Jericho agreement, and the letters which led to the mutual recognition.

Jericho Closure To Allow Palestinian Reorganization

TA2405142894 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Major General Ilan Biran, commander of Central Command, today decided to impose a closure on Jericho to allow the heads of the Palestinian police in the city to organize. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] wishes to make sure that all the Palestinian policemen stationed in the city are clear on their authorities and powers pertaining to Israeli citizens traveling inside Jericho. The decision came in the wake of a series of incidents over the past few days, including this morning's incident.

Closure Begins 1400 GMT 24 May

TA2405155794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] The head of the Army's Central Command, Major General Ilan Biran, has barred for 24 hours the entry of Israelis and Arabs from the territories to the Jericho area in order to allow the Palestinian police to organize themselves and to prevent misunderstandings. This was announced by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman, who said the order will be in effect from 5 PM this evening to 5 PM [both 1400 GMT] tomorrow.

General on 'Contingency Plans' for Return to Gaza

TA2405200994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Major General Matan Vilna'i, head of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Southern Command, said today that the IDF has contingency plans to return to Gaza should the need for such an operation arise. He made the remarks on a television show this evening.

Chief of Staff on Palestinian Police, Hizballah

TA2405175194 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 24 May 94

[Interview with Major General Amnon Shahaq, deputy chief of staff, by Eli Nisan at the Knesset on 24 May—recorded, in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles; processed from the Hebrew]

[Text] [Nisan] Two weeks after the implementation of the autonomy agreement in Gaza and Jericho, can you say Israel is pleased with the way the agreement is being implemented and with the deployment of the Palestinian police?

[Shahaq] The Palestinian police is in a process of entering the territory; this is not completed yet. So far, more than 3,200 policemen came in, and more are to

arrive. Those who have arrived, and I saw them on the ground, came from far away. I believe they have to study Gaza. They are not familiar with Gaza and I do not believe they are familiar with policing duties because they have not been policemen for several years. At the same time, judging from discussions with the police commanders, I can say that the Palestinian police commanders understand they need to be effective on the ground immediately and see to it that law, order, and security prevail.

[Nisan] Do you believe that the PLO will be able to establish its control in Gaza and Jericho, vis-a-vis Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad, and prevent acts of terror against Israel?

[Shahaq] I believe that the PLO realizes that if it does not establish control over the territory, others will. If others control the territory, the PLO will have simply failed. I believe the PLO understands this, and it has a vested interest in and the ability to attain full control.

[Nisan] As the person who conducted the negotiations with the Palestinians, do you believe 'Arafat's declarations will impinge on the continued implementation of the autonomy agreement?

[Shahaq] I believe that such declarations do not contribute. Just the contrary, they damage the process. It is irrelevant which declarations these are. Any declaration that can be interpreted in more than o6e way, with some interpretations being of the kind we have heard recently—justifiably, I believe—cause damage. The Palestinian leaders are better advised to think twice before they issue declarations.

[Nisan] How do you refer to the threats made by Hizballah after the abduction of Musfata al-Dirani?

[Shahaq] Hizballah made threats and carried out operations before the kidnapping of al-Dirani. Let us not be naive and start believing that Hizballah will suddenly attack us only because we kidnapped al-Dirani. Hizballah has always tried to hurt us in various locations. I believe we should be on the alert wherever Hizballah might attempt to attack Israel.

[Nisan] Do you expect an escalation in the north?

[Shahaq] I believe Hizballah will attempt to make good on its declarations. We must be ready wherever we believe Hizballah might attempt to take action.

Cable Says Peres Finds U.S. Peace Role 'Weak'

TA2505084594 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 May 94 p A1

[Report by Washington correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpt] "The U.S. involvement in the peace process is weak and lacks assertiveness," Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres told French President Francois Mitterrand in a meeting last week, according to a cable sent by Dr. Yehuda Lankry, Israel's ambassador to France. The remarks were made in the context of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's mediation efforts between Israel and Syria.

According to the ambassador's classified cable, Peres said "Clinton is obviously more involved in economic issues than in foreign policy, and Christopher cannot upstage his superior." The foreign minister clarified through an aide that in his meeting with Mitterrand, he had expounded on the criticism leveled at the Americans by the Syrians. According to the aide, Peres himself believes that the U.S. Administration "is doing its utmost to promote the process." It should be noted that the talk was conducted in French, Ambassador Lankry's mother tongue. [passage omitted]

Ministry Official on State of Defense Industries

TA1905114294 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 May 94 p A10

[Report by security affairs correspondent Sharon Sade]

[Text] The decline in the defense industries' sales to the local market and in budget allocations for security-related research and development [R&D] projects will continue as the peace process makes progress. This was stated yesterday by Defense Ministry Director General David 'Ivri at a seminar on Israel's security in an era of peace, held at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies.

According to him, "this will happen because a growing part of the defense budget, which has not changed much, is earmarked for ongoing needs resulted from the political process, such as the redeployment of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] units and investments in the protection of settlements. This comes at the expense of purchases from the defense industries and the allocation of funds for security-related R&D."

"This is why," 'Ivri said, "the industries will have to prepare for this on their own and find alternative marketing solutions to compensate for the expected decline in income." He added that the more progress the peace process makes, the less prominent will the defense industries be in the framework of the defense establishment. Hence, their continued existence will become a national matter.

'Ivri went on to say that additional resources must be located for security R&D projects because this will help Israel sustain its technological qualitative edge, which is a major part of its deterrent ability, and could help the industries offer attractive products on the international markets.

'Ivri believes that the peace process is not the only thing to impact on the defense industries. They will mainly be affected by the state of the international markets, because most of the Israeli products—some two-thirds—are sold to foreign costumers. At the same time, 'Ivri criticized the prevailing sentiment that the decline

in weapons sales on the international market is the main reason for the deteriorated condition of the defense industries.

'Ivri presented data that show that the scope of Israel's defense exports rose by 75 percent between 1978 and 1992, while sales by other countries dropped 45 percent during the same period, and that decline continues. 'Ivri added that over the past several years, there has been a slight and gradual drop in Israel's security exports, which corresponds with the global markets.

The Defense Ministry director general pointed to additional difficulties for Israeli exports, such as tougher competition from government-sponsored Western industries; a policy of banning the transfer of technologies and know-how adopted by the United States and other countries; the restrictions on the use of U.S. aid, 90 percent of which is designated for the purchase of equipment in the United States; the need to obtain export permits for Israeli systems equipped with U.S.-made components, which makes arms deals more difficult and slower; and more.

He further said that the defense industries must become smaller and adjust to the change in demands from clients who are more interested today in upgrading systems and in sophisticated complementary systems such as guided missiles and bombs, intelligence-oriented systems, electronic warfare, and command and control units, and less interested in basic ammunition and equipment such as airplanes, tanks, and armored vehicles, of which there is plenty on the global market and at relatively low prices.

This explains why the Military Industries are in trouble. "Israel's relatively comfortable situation has helped to open new markets for the industries, made the establishment of business ties with foreign countries easier, and created greater potential for sales to nearby countries as well. At the same time, the effective scope of sales depends on defense budgets on the receiving end, and they are on the decline internationally," he said.

The speakers at the seminar unanimously agreed that the Middle East peace process is a result of Israel's image as a deterrent, which caused most of the Arab countries to abandon the military option and opt for a political dialogue. Most of the speakers expressed the belief that an image of powerful deterrent ability will guarantee long-term peace and stability in the Middle East.

Treasury Official Views Palestinian Economy

TA1605081094 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 6 May 94 pp 7, 23

[Interview with David Brodet, director of the Finance Ministry's Budget Department, by Sever Plotzker at the Finance Ministry in Tel Aviv on 3 May]

[Text] [Plotzker] What are we leaving the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and Jericho? How much money is left in the till?

[Brodet] We are not petty. When Israel withdraws from the Gaza Strip there will be tens of millions of shekels in the Civil Administration coffers; all of the planned budget for May. This money will be turned over to the Palestinians and will suffice to finance the daily activities of the Palestinian authority in the Gaza Strip and Jericho for two or three weeks. After that, they are in charge.

[Plotzker] Will they manage?

[Brodet] They have no choice and they have no money. This is a great organizational and managerial incentive. There will also be debts to pay immediately. Water, electricity.

As a goodwill gesture, we are leaving them the Civil Administration's computer network and a package of diskettes with detailed budget software programs free of charge. As soon as they load the software, they will know who to pay, when, and how much. They will be able to make use of an efficient tax collection system, the same system used by the Civil Administration and its Palestinian employees. They wanted overlapping and that is what they will get.

We are handing over to them an effective and well-equipped administration machine with enough gas to reach the next gas station. Money, however, is something that they will have to raise by themselves, and immediately.

[Plotzker] The World Bank announced today that it would give them $1.2 billion. That sets them up pretty well, does it not?

[Brodet] Far from it. The World Bank, as the representative of the countries contributing to the Palestinian entity, has solicited commitments of $1.2 billion in aid for the Palestinian self-governing authority. This sum will be spread out over three years, which means about $400 million annually. The Palestinians will get a bit more in the first year but right now there is no point in talking about billions.

[Plotzker] Did you discuss this issue in your talks? Do the Palestinians realize their needs?

[Brodet] Certainly. They lose sleep over this. When we started the economic negotiations in November 1993, they stated that they had no intention of collecting taxes from the Palestinian population. Yasir 'Arafat sent Abu-al-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'], the head of the Palestinian economic delegation, his grandiose plan for a tax paradise in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. When the PLO came in there, it would make everyone happy and cancel most taxes. Everything would be dirt cheap. When we asked them how they intended to finance their budget they replied that the donor countries would pay for it. In those days, incidentally, the Palestinian delegation did not always have enough money to pay for their phone calls.

[Plotzker] In the end, however, the economic agreement signed with the PLO stipulates that the taxes in the territories will be the same as those in Israel.

[Brodet] There was only one problem with the wonderful plan for a tax paradise in the Gaza Strip and Jericho: its implementation. The Western countries which promised money and aid to the Palestinians took one look at the plan and categorically rejected it. The Palestinians were very clearly told that they would not get a red cent to just squander away. Before giving the Palestinians any money, the Western countries first demanded to know how much money the Palestinian authority planned to collect in taxes from its constituents, which projects it intended to spend the money on, who would oversee expenditures, and who would submit the reports. Incidentally, part of the money was given as bridging loans.

[Plotzker] Did the World Bank's tough approach have any impact on the negotiations?

[Brodet] It had an immediate effect. We saw the Palestinians' faces sink. At the end of February this year, after three months of negotiations, they began to thoroughly study the Israeli tax system. Several seminars were held for them, and the Palestinians admitted they would have no choice but to impose heavy taxes. The Israeli customs rate did not seem excessively high any more, perhaps even too low. A value added tax of 15 to 16 percent struck them as necessary. That is how things are when you begin to stand on your own two feet.

[Plotzker] How big a budget will the Palestinian national authority have?

[Brodet] In our assessment, the anticipated expenditures during the first year will reach approximately one billion shekels.

[Plotzker] What does that include?

[Brodet] Their budget will include one major item that the Israeli Civilian Administration did not have to take into account: the cost of establishing, equipping, and operating the Palestinian police force. This will cost at least 450 million shekels in the first year. The establishment and operation of the autonomy institutions will cost at least 100 million shekels. They will employ many new civil servants and have to pay the salaries of officials from Tunis who have become accustomed to living conditions there. They also told us that they would have to expand administrative and social welfare services for the local population.

[Plotzker] Will they have a budget deficit?

[Brodet] They will have a large deficit of 400 to 500 million shekels.

[Plotzker] Will they print money to cover it?

[Brodet] Fortunately for them, they are not permitted to print their own money. The shekel will continue to be the accepted currency in the territories.

The Palestinians assume that external aid will cover the cost of financing the police and the self-governing institutions for the first six months. They believe that they will thus be able to balance the budget and continue functioning. Maybe they will be able to sell Gaza Municipality bonds.

[Plotzker] Did the Palestinians raise the issue of what they call "compensation for the occupation." After all, they claim that Israel appropriated billions of dollars in taxes from the residents of the territories as well as national insurance payments from Palestinian workers in Israel.

[Brodet] Now that the agreement is signed I can tell you about this. This issue was mentioned at the first dinner between Abu-al- 'Ala' and Finance Minister Avraham Shohat. We decided to study the matter thoroughly and collected all the relevant data starting from 1970, when the first group of Palestinian workers were allowed into Israel. We compared the income we received with the Military Government's and Civil Administration's expenditures on behalf of the residents.

[Plotzker] What was the bottom line?

[Brodet] Between 1970 and 1994, the Israeli Government collected approximately 2.5 to 3 billion shekels at today's rates from the Palestinians, including VAT and income taxes in the territories and income taxes and national insurance payments from the workers who were employed in Israel. One must remember that Israel only started collecting taxes from the residents of the territories in a serious way in the 1980's. At the same time, Israel transferred 7.5 billion shekels to finance civilian budgets in the territories and awarded Palestinian workers another 2.8 billion shekels worth of special tax credits. The bottom line is that we gave the Palestinians a net sum of about 7 billion shekels. We presented this account to the Palestinian representatives in Paris.

[Plotzker] So, are they going to return the money?

[Brodet] We presented the bill to underscore the fact that the past must be forgotten. There must be no more settling of accounts between Palestinians and Israelis.

[Plotzker] You sat down with senior PLO officials for hundreds of hours, for whole days and nights, whereas just a short while ago we were bitter enemies. How did that fact influence the course of the talks?

[Brodet] If in the beginning there was a feeling of enmity on the national level, it disappeared. We really became friends. We celebrated birthdays and laughed together. We passed each other phone calls. During Ramadan we were careful not to offend their religious sensitivities. We ate kosher food all the time. The Israeli Embassy in Paris took care of that. Most of the time, the French paid and occasionally we did. Sometimes the Palestinians invited everyone to a Lebanese restaurant.

[Plotzker] When the talks began, you presented the Palestinians a conception of an almost total economic

union between the Palestinian and Israeli economies. You proposed that the PLO opt for an Israeli-oriented economy as opposed to a Jordanian one. When did they become convinced that this was the right choice?

[Brodet] In our assessment, they were already convinced of this upon arrival. Their delegation included excellent economists and professionals with doctorates from Western universities, people with an international background who knew very well that the Palestinian economy had no chance of growing and developing without establishing tight links with Israel. The Jordanian option, from the economic point of view, was very unattractive to the Palestinians. The problem was with the Jordanian pressure and the hesitancy of the political leadership in Tunis, which obviously did not want to burn its bridges with Jordan.

[Plotzker] Would you describe the negotiations as being strewn with crises?

[Brodet] No. I remember two fundamental crises, both political in nature, and many mini-crises which were resolved without leaving any traces. I am not complaining about this. The agreement we wanted to achieve was very complicated and sets many precedents. Neither party had anything to base themselves on. The PLO came to the talks out of a weaker position. It is an organization that never dealt with building an economy or planning a national economic policy. We dragged suitcases full of position papers.

[Plotzker] What was the most serious crisis?

[Brodet] Contrary to the media reports in Israel, the most serious crises did not pertain to the nature of relations between the Palestinian and Israeli economies but rather to the relations between the Palestinian economy, Jordan, and the Arab countries.

The most difficult crisis occurred on the eve of the Hebron massacre [25 February 1994], after the PLO delegation in Amman signed a declaration of economic principles with Jordan. Abu-al- 'Ala' proposed that the Palestinians be allowed to open up the eastern border and establish a free trade zone with Jordan as well as Israel. We could not accept such a proposal because it would expose the Israeli economy to unrestricted imports from all the Arab and Islamic countries, with no reciprocity and no negotiations. Prior to all this, the Palestinians were already angry at us for signing a banking agreement with Jordan. One could sense an impending explosion in the air. A marathon discussion, lasting almost a whole day, between Abu-al-'Ala' and Shohat got the talks back on track.

Shohat was at his best during the last months of the negotiations. He solved problems and radiated understanding. Shohat and Abu-al-'Ala got along well. They loved each other's jokes.

[Plotzker] Was there also a last-minute crisis of the kind the PLO loves so much?

[Brodet] Shohat and Abu-al-'Ala' completed most of the agreement before the talks were halted in the wake of the Hebron massacre. All kinds of crises can pop up, however, even at the last minute. They told us: after we sign an agreement on open economic relations, on a bona fide economic union with Israel, we cannot seal off the Palestinian self-government to goods from the Arab world and Islamic countries. That would be simply inconceivable. We could understand the political constraints here, and agreed to prepare a detailed, precise list of goods the autonomy could import from Egypt, Jordan, and other Islamic countries with our approval.

For example, we authorized the import of several thousand Jordanian-made television sets. Will that bother anyone in Israel? Of course not. Israel imports 120,000 television sets a year from all over the world. But this will enable the Palestinians to tell the Arab world that they have not sold themselves out to the Israelis.

[Plotzker] The Palestinians committed themselves in writing to establish a national insurance institute, monetary authority, and national insurance company, as well as other things. We promised that when we collect custom levies and taxes for them, we will transfer the money to these new institutions. Whom will we send the money to if these institutions are not established?

[Brodet] When a product destined for Gaza reaches the Ashdod port, Israeli customs inspectors will assess its value and exact a customs tariff. The money will be deposited in an account set up by the Palestinian authority. We will transfer the income tax and national insurance we collect from Palestinian workers in Israel in the same way.

During the first year, we will transfer approximately 150 million to the Palestinian authority in this way. We will not stand around with a stopwatch in our hand henpecking the Palestinians to establish their own stock market and pension funds. As far as they are concerned the important thing is organizing a budget, collecting taxes (they can collect about 300 million shekels in the Gaza Strip and Jericho in the first year), and satisfy the demands of the countries donating funds within the framework of the World Bank so that they will indeed send the money.

[Plotzker] Which sectors of the Israeli economy will be detrimentally affected by the agreement with the PLO?

[Brodet] We attempted to calculate the effects of the agreement on each individual branch and sub-branch of the economy. Except for certain farmers who grow three kinds of vegetables, no one else will be affected at all, and with time will even begin to make a profit.

[Plotzker] Will Israel's economy remain unharmed even when the Palestinian economy takes off?

[Brodet] On the contrary. That is when we will really start to enjoy things. What do we export to the Gaza Strip today? Approximately $200 million worth of

goods. I can see no foreign element capable of replacing Israel's economic and commercial presence there. Our produce is in very high demand in the territories. It enjoys a good reputation for quality. Our ports, in Haifa and Ashdod, will continue to serve Palestinian importers, especially in the renovation, construction, and development projects that will be implemented by the Palestinian self-government.

[Plotzker] Have we guaranteed our participation in these development and renovation projects?

[Brodet] The government cannot act in lieu of joint business projects. The projects will start when the mutual feelings of suspicion and fear have dissipated. We adamantly insisted on one thing: The Cairo agreements clearly prohibit any discrimination against Israeli entrepreneurs, companies, or the State of Israel in general. We will be allowed to bid for any tender.

[Plotzker] How much compensation has the Treasury allocated for the expected damages to agriculture?

[Brodet] The Treasury will try to be understanding toward the vegetable growers harmed by the agreement; however, we are not talking about large sums. We are not even thinking along the lines of compensation, we are thinking about growth.

[Plotzker] What do you mean?

[Brodet] Our model for the Palestinian economy foresees a dramatic shift toward a 20-percent real growth rate beginning in 1995. The Palestinian economy's gross national product may grow by 100 percent within three years. At the same time, we expect a six to seven percent growth rate in the Israeli economy.

[Plotzker] At the same time? Will one not come at the expense of the other?

[Brodet] No, both will come together. We will have complementary economies.

Al-Dirani Abduction Prompts Protest, Denunciations

Complaint Lodged With UN

NC2405142094 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1300 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Lebanon today lodged a protest with the UN Security Council against Israel for the kidnapping of Mustafa al-Dirani, the official in the faithful resistance, from his home in al-Biqa' on Saturday 21 May.

Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz clarified that the complaint does not yet request the Security Council to convene. He noted that Lebanon reserves the right to ask the Security Council to convene when necessary. Minister Buwayz described the kidnapping as an act of piracy that violates human rights and Lebanon's sovereignty, and attacks its security and stability.

REUTER cited a responsible official at the Foreign Ministry as saying that the Lebanese complaint also demands that Israel should quickly release al-Dirani and return him to Lebanon since this act is considered a violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and contradicts the trends toward peace in the region.

Hizballah Leader Decries Action

NC2405113994 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Commenting on the Israeli military operation in al-Biqa', Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah said the kidnapping of al-Dirani has more implications than the enemy has announced regarding the need to secure information about the detained Israeli airman. He said the operation was designed to achieve political objectives in Lebanon. He called for dealing with this incident with the same importance and objectives given it by the enemy.

Shaykh Nasrallah emphasized that this cowardly action confirms the inability of the Zionists to face the heroes of the resistance who are confronting the enemy's oppression and forces in broad daylight, recalling the heroic steadfastness of the mujahidin during the seven-day war.

Hizballah Deputies, Others React

NC2505060594 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 25 May 94

[Text] Israel's abduction of Mustafa al-Dirani continues to provoke condemnation and denunciation.

Anwar al-Khalil, minister of state for Chamber of Deputies affairs, asked about the U.S. stance on the kidnapping operation. He said the United States might, intentionally or otherwise, have paved the way for Israel to pursue its terrorist policy, first, by ignoring Lebanon on its shuttle tour and second, by including Syria on the list of terrorist states. He stressed that the kidnapping will increase Lebanon's determination to adhere to the resistance as one of the most legitimate methods to liberate the land.

The Loyalty to the Resistance Bloc [Hizballah parliamentary bloc] has stressed that the kidnapping represented overt defiance and provocation. It called for the highest degree of alertness and vigilance.

The act of piracy was also denounced by Deputy Muhammad Baydun, the Amal Movement, the Progressive Socialist Party, and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party.

Israeli Troops Alert to Kidnapping Threat

NC2505102194 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0700 GMT 25 May 94

[Excerpt] General Antoine Lahd, accompanied by Israeli North Region Commander General Yitzhaq Mordekhay, Ground Army Commander Emmanuel Saqr, and Liaison Unit Commander Gabi Ashkenazi, visited al-Bayyadah yesterday to wish a happy 'Id al-Adha to Druze religious leaders. General Lahd hoped the next year will bring happiness and peace and that all foreign armies, including the Israeli and Syrian armies, will withdraw from Lebanon. But he noted that the Israelis are deployed on a particular part of the Lebanese territory for their security needs. The objectives and motives of the Syrians are known to all.

Mordekhay offered his 'Id congratulations and said that the region is enjoying security, thanks to the efforts of its sons, especially members of the South Lebanese Army. He said the Israeli soldiers have been ordered to be careful after information that sabotage elements are trying to kidnap them. He said he currently has no information about any specific reaction by the sabotage organizations in Lebanon to the kidnapping of Mustafa al-Dirani. He said the Israeli Army is prepared for any eventuality. [passage omitted]

Khaddam 'Not Optimistic' on Talks with Israel

PM2405105394 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 May 94 p 5

[Report by Ibrahim Humaydi: "Damascus Wants To Reach Understanding on Everything with Israelis Before Signing Peace Agreement"]

[Excerpts] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher had hardly started to get ready to return to Washington at the end of his Middle East tour, which involved diplomatic efforts between Damascus and Tel Aviv, when Syria announced that the Israeli proposals conveyed by Christopher to President Hafiz al-Asad had not helped to achieve progress toward peace, because they did not contain a fundamental change in the Israeli position. And that the differences are still "wide" over the peaceful solution method. [passage omitted]

Christopher's visit has revealed that the axes of the Syrian-Israeli negotiations are: withdrawal, security, and relations. And that with regard to the first axis the negotiations focus on the depth of the withdrawal, its duration, and its stages. With regard to the second axis, the two sides discuss security arrangements, their locations, their technologies, and deployment of the two sides' armed forces. As for the third axis, it concerns measures to build trust and relations between the two sides after the full withdrawal from the Golan, and the linkage between relations and the withdrawal question and the coincidence between them.

While Israeli sources point to Syria's agreement to conduct a phased withdrawal over three years and to establish direct relations with Israel—but Syria still has not agreed to the question of opening an Israeli embassy—[Syrian] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam stresses the Syrians' rejection of a phased withdrawal, saying that Syria demands a "quick Israeli withdrawal from the Golan completed in a reasonable time," without Syrian officials' involvement in determining the period, leaving this to "the time Israeli forces need to conduct the logistic withdrawal process," otherwise the conflict between the two sides would remain, "and let it continue for 500 years" between Syria and Israel.

Well-informed sources told AL-HAYAH that Khaddam said "Israel did not occupy the Golan in stages. The Golan is 15 km wide (the front from north to south), so why phased withdrawal now." The sources, which attended Khaddam's meeting with a U.S. delegation during Christopher's presence in Damascus, said that Syria rejects a phased withdrawal. And that the vice president was not optimistic about achieving important progress in negotiations. "We cannot talk about optimism" as long as Israel is not committed to a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights to the 4 June 1967 borders.

This means Syria's rejection of any Israeli demand for "minor alterations" to the borders involving incomplete withdrawal.

As for the security question, a high-ranking Syrian official stressed to AL-HAYAH that [security arrangements] should be "equal" on both sides of the border. He also stressed Syria's refusal to make security arrangements on the Syrian side different from those on the Israeli side, especially as Syria believes that, if arrangements are not equal, they should be at the expense of the Israelis, who "are the occupying party and the aggressor." This is in addition to deploying international forces (U.S. and Russian), as President Boris Yeltsin announced his country's willingness to respond to this request in more than one message conveyed to President al-Asad. [passage omitted]

The sources told AL-HAYAH that Khaddam said: "Israel wants both land and peace, and the two conflict with one another. And no peace can be achieved without full withdrawal." The Syrian vice president believes that any agreement not based on justice and right "will not last long, and the principles of justice prompt that all the Golan Heights return to Syria."

Khaddam was asked: "Do you believe that we could see the picture of an Israeli family under the flag of an Israeli embassy in Damascus?" He replied: "When Israel withdraws fully from the Golan and Yitzhaq Rabin announces his willingness to withdraw, he will hear the answer." [passage omitted]

Russian Envoy Arrives, Comments on Visit

JN2305185194 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 23 May 94

[Text] Viktor Posuvalyuk, personal envoy of Russian President Boris Yeltsin and director of the Middle East Department at the Russian Foreign Ministry, arrived in Damascus today. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Ghassan Raslan, director of the East European Department at the Foreign Ministry.

Posuvalyuk told journalists upon arrival that his visit was aimed at activating the peace process and holding consultations and exchanging views with Syrian officials on the peace process and cooperation between the two countries.

Chinese Communist Party Delegation Pays Visit

To Meet With Ba'th Party Officials

JN2405074694 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Damascus—At the invitation of the National Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, a delegation from the Chinese Communist Party, led by Wei Jianxing, member of the Political Bureau and head of the Chinese Federation of Trade Unions, arrived in Damascus yesterday evening.

The delegation was received at Damascus International Airport by comrade Mut'ib Shinan, member of the Ba'th

Party's National Command; comrade 'Abdallah Abu-al-Rish, member of the Party Committee for Supervision and Inspection; comrade Mustafa 'Isa, member of the Executive Bureau of the General Federation of Trade Unions and secretary of the Arab and International Relations Office; several comrades in the National Command; and the Chinese ambassador in Damascus.

The delegation will hold party talks with the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, in addition to political meetings with party and state officials.

Chinese Delegation, ASBP Hold Talks

JN2405135394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] A round of talks was held at the National Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP] today between the ASBP delegation led by Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, ASBP assistant secretary general, and the delegation of the Chinese Communist Party, led by Comrade Wei Jianxing, member of the Political Bureau and head of the Chinese Federation of Trade Unions.

Attending the talks on the Syrian side were Comrade Mut'ib Shinan, ASBP National Command member, and 'Abdallah Abu-al-Rish, member of the Party Committee for Supervision and Inspection. On the Chinese side were members of the accompanying Chinese Communist Party delegation.

The talks dealt with the progress in relations of cooperation between the two friendly parties in accordance with the program signed between them in 1991. The two sides also reviewed the two parties' activities in their countries to continue the process of development and construction in order to achieve the objectives set by each party in its program of action to develop its country based on the independent option of the people.

The two sides also stressed the need to promote cooperation between the two parties in the interest of the two friendly peoples and countries. They also stressed the importance of consultation and coordination on all the international issues and developments of joint interest to both parties and countries.

The two sides also reviewed developments in the Arab and international arenas and in southeast Asia, and the current international developments' effects on international relations. The two sides stressed the importance of international cooperation to achieve world peace and security in a way to fulfill peoples' desire to safeguard their independence, to determine their future, and to affirm their independent option to develop their countries.

Further on Talks

JN2405165894 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 24 May 94

[Excerpts] A round of talks was held at the National Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP] today between the ASBP delegation, led by comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, ASBP assistant secretary general, and the delegation of the Chinese Communist Party, led by Comrade Wei Jianxing, member of the Political Bureau and head of the Chinese Federation of Trade Unions. [passage omitted]

Comrade al-Ahmar delivered a speech in which he stressed Syria's adherence to its firm principles to build a new society, to deal with the current peace process in our region, and to establish a just and comprehensive peace based on international legitimacy and its relevant resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, which stipulate the need to return the occupied Arab territories and the usurped rights to their rightful owners.

Comrade al-Ahmar stressed that Syria wants to make this process successful by achieving its goals and to seriously contribute, along with the honest forces in the world, to efforts to make this march successful. He also explained that the peace process is stumbling because of Israel's intransigent position and its refusal to commit itself to withdrawing from all the Arab territories, which it has occupied since 1967, as stipulated in UN resolutions.

In his speech, comrade al-Ahmar called on the international community, foremost of which are its active forces, to exert efforts to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy and to force Israel to implement its relevant parts in order to end its occupation of the Arab territories, to remove hotbeds, and to achieve security, stability, and peace for everyone. He pointed out that Syria would continue efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace and would not relinquish an inch of its occupied territories in the Golan, or any Arab right.

For his part, Comrade Jianxing, head of the Chinese Communist Party delegation, spoke about current developments in China and the successes achieved in recent years under the policy it has defined for itself. He also stressed his party's desire to promote relations with the ASBP and between his country and Syria and urged continued consultations on the most important current international issues.

He then stressed his country's support for the implementation of UN Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict in order to achieve a solution to the Middle East problem based on these resolutions and in a way that achieves just and comprehensive peace in the region. He also praised Syria's position, its desire to achieve peace under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad, and its status and role both on the regional and international levels, as well as the developments and successes he has seen in Syria. He wished Syria and its people further progress and prosperity.

India

Minister: Country Ready To Talk to Kashmiri 'Militants'

BK2205091994 Hong Kong AFP in English 0827 GMT 22 May 94

[Text] New Delhi, May 22 (AFP)—India is ready to talk to Moslem militants to end the four-year-old separatist campaign in Kashmir, but Pakistan cannot be included in the negotiations, a federal minister said here on Sunday [23 May].

Internal Security Minister Rajesh Pilot told the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency that New Delhi had "an open mind on holding talks with anybody if it helps to bring back normalcy in Kashmir."

But Pilot rejected suggestions from a top Kashmiri militant leader, Yasin Malik, that New Delhi should start an unconditional dialogue with Kashmiris and Pakistan if it wanted peace in the northern state.

"The talks should be among ourselves," Pilot said, referring to India and to Moslem militants in Kashmir fighting for the secession of the state, the only one with a Moslem majority. Pilot ruled out the inclusion of "any third party."

It was the first Indian reaction to Saturday's offer by Malik of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) that separatist unrest could end in Kashmir if India talked unconditionally to Kashmiris and Pakistan.

Indian newspapers on Sunday quoted Malik as saying in Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir, that his outlawed JKLF would announce a unilateral truce if New Delhi agreed to the negotiations.

Indian leaders have said the guerrillas must renounce violence before talks can start. But Malik, 30, freed on May 16 after nearly four years in prison, said: "You cannot talk of peace and then make any move toward it conditional."

Malik, who returned to Kashmir two days after his release, said the JKLF, the premier Moslem guerrilla group, stood for the "total independence" of Kashmir, now divided between India and Pakistan.

"The Kashmir issue is not merely a territorial dispute between India and Pakistan," he declared. According to Indian newspapers he denied that the Kashmiri separatist campaign, in which nearly 10,000 have lost their lives, aimed to carve out an independent state exclusively for Moslems.

"We do not demand freedom for a particular community or a particular area. We strive for total independence of the 13 million Kashmiris, irrespective of their caste, colour, race, region or faith.

"The independence of Kashmir means the independence of the 85,000 square miles (136,000 square kilometers) that constitute our homeland," he said, making clear he meant both the two-thirds of the state within India and the rest held by Pakistan.

India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars since 1947 over Kashmir. New Delhi accuses Islamabad of arming the militant groups, which Pakistan denies.

All Moslem separatist groups except the JKLF want the Indian-held Kashmir to join Pakistan.

Other Moslem groups want to make Kashmir an Islamic state, and have forced thousands of Hindus who have lived in the Kashmir valley for generations to flee. Malik said he wanted the Hindus to return.

Malik, who helped launch the Kashmiri separatist campaign in 1989, was arrested by Indian security forces in Srinagar in August 1990 and held in prison until last week.

Work on Nuclear Reactors Suspended After Mishap

BK2505095894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 May 94

[Text] The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board, AERB, has ordered the suspension of all construction work of the inner container structures of the proposed nuclear reactors in Karnataka and Rajasthan. The AERB order was issued following preliminary analysis of the collapse of a large concrete portion of the inner container dome in the (Kaiga) unit-one project in Karnataka. The board has decided to review the construction procedure in use. The AERB chairman, Dr. A. Gopalakrishanan, has said that a high-level expert committee has been constituted to probe into the incident. He clarified that the (Kaiga) project is still under construction, and no nuclear fuel or heavy water has been transferred to the site. As such, there is no question of any radioactive release or radiological impact due to the incident, he added.

Authorities Suspect Design Flaw

BK2505044894 Hong Kong AFP in English 0424 GMT 25 May 94

[Text] New Delhi, May 25 (AFP)—Indian authorities have halted the construction of two nuclear power projects after a suspected design flaw caused the collapse of a reactor dome at the Kaiga plant in the southern state of Karnataka.

A. Gopalakrishnan, chief of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board, said in a statement Tuesday that work on the four nuclear reactors being built in Kaiga and Rawatbhata in the northern desert state of Rajasthan had been stopped. He said the move was related to the May 13 collapse of the concrete reactor dome in Kaiga which left 14 workers injured. Nearly 40 percent of the 130-tonne dome fell down.

A probe has been ordered into the incident, blamed on possible design and construction flaws. All four nuclear reactors on which work has stopped have the same design.

The dome's function is to prevent the escape of radiation in case of an accident.

Gopalakrishnan clarified that the Kaiga project was still under construction and no nuclear fuel or heavy water had been transferred to the plant. "Hence there is no question of any radioactivity release or radiological impact due to the incident," he said. But the temporary halt to construction would help authorities review the dome design and construction methods to correct any flaws, Gopalakrishnan said, adding similar dome failures had taken place in the United States. Findings of the probe ordered into the incident will be made available in two months.

India's seven existing nuclear power plants were closed for inspection in July 1993 after a fire broke out at the Narora station in northern India.

Minister Denies Receiving DPRK Food Request

BK2305141494 Hong Kong AFP in English 1231 GMT 23 May 94

[Text] New Delhi, May 23 (AFP)—Jyoti Basu, chief minister of the Indian state of West Bengal, denied on Monday [24 May] press reports that North Korea had requested food aid during his recent visit to Pyongyang. Basu, a member of the politburo of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), said in a statement that the reports that North Korean officials had asked him to arrange emergency shipments of rice from India were "absolutely baseless."

"I had talks with several leaders of (North Korea), including the prime minister," said Basu, who visited North Korea from May 7-14. "But no one made such a request to me.

"On the contrary, I was impressed by their economic development, construction work and their confidence to meet any situation," he said. "The news item is obviously intended to show (North Korea) in a bad light."

Basu, who heads India's sole communist state government, has been in power in West Bengal for 17 years.

Prime Minister Rao Concludes U.S. Visit

Voices 'Satisfaction' With Talks

BK2005153994 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 20 May 94

[Text] The prime minister has expressed satisfaction on his visit to the United States. Addressing a news conference in Washington D.C., Mr. Narasimha Rao said though essentially a goodwill mission, the visit has both political and economic content. His discussions with President Clinton had convinced him that India and the United States can develop bilateral relationship of maturity and strength. It can contribute not only to mutual good but also to the world as a whole. His current visit has helped towards developing better understanding between the two countries, Mr. Rao observed.

Returns to New Delhi

BK2305055494 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 21 May 94

[Text] The prime minister returned to New Delhi this morning on the completion of his week-long visit to the United States. Mr. Narasimha Rao was received at the airport by the home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan; the civil aviation and tourism minister, Mr. Ghlam Nabi Azad; and the Harayana chief minister, Mr. Bhajan Lal, besides others.

As reported the prime minister's arrival in New Delhi was slightly delayed as Air India's special aircraft carrying him and his delegation developed a minor technical snag while landing at Paris for a scheduled halt. A standby aircraft already stationed at Charles de Gaulle Airport was used for the onward journey home.

India-American business leaders have proposed creating two new institutions on Wall Street in New York to chalk out programs for the modernization of Indian industry. Sponsored by the Greater Houston Partnership, the plan was presented to the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, who accompanied the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, on his just concluded U.S. visit. A press release issued by the group says the plan envisages creating mutual funds, venture capital funds and other debt and equity instruments to raise capital for India in the next decade. The release estimated a contribution of at least $100 billion by the U.S. private industries for Indian markets in the next five years. It also said the Indian Americans have the capacity to fund $5 billion per year for the modernization of the country's industry.

The leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, Mr. Atal behari Vajpayee, has lauded the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, for not succumbing to U.S. pressure on the issues of Kashmir and the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Talking to newsmen in Lucknow, Mr. Vajpayee expressed satisfaction on the firm stand taken on these points.

Minister Hails 'Successful' Outcome

BK2305070794 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 22 May 94

[Text] The finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has said that the successful outcome of the Rao-Clinton summit has vindicated that the prime minister's visit to the United States was in the national interest. Speaking to reporters in London, he said both the U.S. Government and captains of American trade and industry have welcomed India's economic reforms program and the strategy integrating its economy with the global

economy. Dr. Singh said there is a lot of enthusiasm in the United States about India's prospects as a large and emerging market offering great opportunities for American investments.

Businessmen Foresee Closer Ties

BK2305141594 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1630 GMT 22 May 94

[Text] The 21-member Indian business delegation that accompanied the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, on his visit to the United States has expressed satisfaction at the outcome of their visit. The delegation comprised representatives from the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Confederation of Indian Industry, and ASSOCHAM [Associated Chamber of Commerce].

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Indian businessmen have termed their visit to the U.S. as highly successful. They feel that the meetings with the U.S. officials and businessmen has helped them to have a free and frank exchange of ideas that will give a major fillip to existing bilateral trade ties. American businessmen have shown special interest in investing in the energy, communications, banking, and financial sectors. Besides areas of infrastructure and consumer durables, a major attraction for the U.S. industry is the large untapped market of 200 million consumers and a growing industrial sector with an insatiable appetite for technology and infrastructure. India's highly skilled class of English-speaking professionals and scientists was another attraction for the U.S. investors.

[Unidentified business leader] The Confederation of Indian Industry signed a memoranda of understanding [MOU] with the National Association of Manufacturers of USA, and this MOU would now really formalize our relationship, which would address the subject of increasing business cooperation involving small and medium-size enterprises in U.S. because large multinational organizations are present here and are reasonably well informed, but the small and medium where there is a tremendous opportunity and this MOU would enable us to focus on that task. [sentence as heard] [end recording]

Editorial Faults Wisner Comment on Security Council

BK2305115494 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 21 May 94 p 8

[Editorial: "Wisner Before the Event"]

[Text] The U.S. ambassador-designate to India Frank Wisner is likely to be an impediment to constructive bilateral dealings. The least that is required of a man holding this office is that he should seem to be free from any bias against the country to which he is assigned. Wisner has failed this test even before the U.S. Senate's approval of his appointment. At tbe Senate's confirmation hearing, his explanation of why, in his view India did not qualify for permanent membership of the Security Council has inevitably given rise to serious misgivings in this country. According to him India's inclusion would "undermine the cohesion" of tbe world body. This defies logic. Worse, Wisner's notion of how the Security Council functions seems to be cock-eyed. What precisely does he mean by "cohesion"? Surely, it could not be anything like a unanimity of opinion about issues before the world. This has never been the case. In fact the Council was always an arena for two rival camps. If they did not manage to break it up, the reason was the existence of the right of veto conferred on the five permanent members, the U.S., the USSR, UK, France and China.

The end of the cold war means that the Council is no longer divided into the old rival camps. Yet, sharp differences on crucial world issues will persist. Cohesion, as the term is commonly understood, is irrelevant here. It could make sense if India had suddenly landed on this planet from outer space. Since that is not so, how can its membership be deemed to threaten the Security Council's cohesion? Frank Wisner perhaps believes that economic or military power should be the sole qualification for entry into the Security Council. If so, he has forgotten that when China became its member it was perhaps less developed industrially than India. Its membership derived entirely from the fact that it was a prominent member of the wartime alliance against the German-Japanese combine.

A plausible explanation of Wisner's obvious faux pas in his reply to a point-blank question on suggestions of India's membership lies in his close association with the Pentagon, as Under-Secretary for Defence. And it is Pentagon more than any other wing of the U.S. administration which Pakistan has manipulated to its advantage over the past four decades. Wisner thus cannot but be fully and sympathetically alive to Pakistani concerns. Since these have turned into an incurable anti-Indian paranoia, it would be natural if the first thing that Wisner almost instinctively remembered while replying to the question about possible Indian entry into the Security Council was Pakistan's opposition to it. Short of making a direct reference to this, he only blurted out that thing about "cohesion". By this reckoning, Wisner would have been an ideal U.S. envoy in Islamabad.

Iran

Daily Reports 700 Killed in Hajj Stampede

NC2405111694 Paris AFP in English 1108 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Tehran, May 25 (AFP)—A stampede at the pilgrimage in Mecca killed 700 people on Monday [24 May], the daily KAYHAN [as received] reported on

Tuesday quoting its correspondent in the Saudi city. Quoting "unofficial sources" in Saudi Arabia, it said six of the dead were Iranians.

A Turkish official has spoken of 182 dead while other eye witnesses put the total at more than 200.

Saudi 'Inefficiency' Blamed

LD2505085594 Tehran IRNA in English 0428 GMT 25 May 94

[Text] Mecca, May 24, IRNA—Although eye-witnesses and hospital officials say a large number of pilgrims were trampled to death in a ceremony known as "stoning the devil" in Mina, 10 kms east of Mecca Monday, Saudi Arabia has so far refused to disclose the number of casualties.

In a bid to acquit Saudi Arabia of any charges of negligence towards providing security for pilgrims, a government official at the Health Ministry announced Monday that 829 pilgrims had died in accidents or from old age and heat since May 12. Eye-witnesses blame yesterday's tragic event on the inefficiency of Saudi officials and their permission to [allow] small and large motor cars to move in the region.

There are contradictory reports of casualties released by representative offices of various countries in Mecca but none of them can be confirmed because of the lack of official statistics and Riyadh's silence on the issue.

Speaker Rejects Interference in Island Dispute

LD2405142794 Tehran IRNA in English 1352 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Tehran, May 24, IRNA—Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri said in a press conference here today that the dispute between Iran and the UAE should be resolved mutually and others have no right to interfere in the matter. The speaker was referring to a recent remark by the Saudi king who sided with the UAE in its dispute with Iran over the island. Nateq-Nuri said Iran was committed to the accord signed in 1971 between Iran and the emir of Sharjah [Al-Shariqah] on Abu Musa Island.

He said Iran had only heightened security at the island after arresting a spy around the island and that this had made the UAE officials unhappy. He said bilateral talks should continue to resolve the minor disputes between the two countries, in order not to provide the "aliens to engage in mischief." The negotiations on the matter had been halted by the United Arab Emirates, he said.

About Iran's relations with Egypt and foreign minister's imminent visit to Cairo, he said Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati will visit Cairo to attend the upcoming meeting of the Non-aligned Movement (NAM). On possible talks between Iran-Egyptian foreign ministers on the sideline of the NAM meeting, he said there were no restrictions on holding talks between the foreign minister and his counterparts from Egypt or other countries. On the obstacles in the way of improving Tehran-Cairo relations, Nateq-Nuri said the main stumbling block was the spread of the spirit of Islamism in Egypt that the Egyptian officials wrongly attribute to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On Iran's foreign debts, the speaker said the amount of the debts was no problem to Iran in light of its huge natural resources. He said that most of the countries of the world are debtors, but, the big powers magnified Iran's debts due to their hostile attitude towards Iran.

On the Middle East peace process and the probability of resolving tension between Syria and Israel, he said Iran's relations with Syria were too solid to easily worsen. In the meantime, he said, "we recommend the Syrian officials not to damage their political prestige because Syria will get nothing from the Zionist regime".

About import of the U.S. goods and if they would leave any cultural impact, he said there was no room for concern regarding the arrival of certain American products such as Coca Cola. Because, he said, "our Islamic and national culture is too strong to be affected negatively by such minor issues."

On the Iran-Iraq relations, he said numerous issues still remained to be solved including the UN Security Council Resolution 598 and the issue of Iranian prisoners of war (pow) as well as the issue of pilgrimage to the holy places in Iraq. The officials of the two countries intend to meet and settle the issue, he said.

On the priorities to be given to the second five-year development plan by the Majlis, he said the Majlis places emphasis on social justice, restructuring the adminstrative system, reducing reliance on oil revenues and reviving the pricing mechanism.

On the Saudi ban on holding the special ceremony of "antipathy towards atheists," he said despite the harassment done by the Saudis, the incident was unlikely to result in break off of diplomatic relations due to the two countries being neighbours and because of the interests of the world of Islam.

Nateq-Nuri, Velayati Receive Kyrgyz Delegation

LD2305183494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 23 May 94

[Text] Mr. Sherimkulov, the chairman of the Kyrgyzstan Supreme Council, who has come to Iran at the head of a high-ranking delegation on his return from hajj, met and conferred with Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri this afternoon.

At the meeting, which was also attended by the deputy prime minister and a number of Kyrgyz members of parliament, Mr. Nateq-Nuri referred to the common denominators between Kyrgyzstan and Iran. He said: We are prepared to have parliamentary cooperation and

to set up friendship groups and exchange legislative data with your country. He proposed active cooperation within the framework of ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] and the setting up of a joint economic committee of the two countries.

Thanking Iran for the opening of its embassy in Bishkek and stressing the importance of ECO as the most important regional cooperation organization, the Kyrgyz parliamentary speaker said: The agreements reached during the Iranian president's visit to Kyrgyzstan, which have been signed by the two countries' ministers, are progressing step by step today. We are in favor of the expansion of economic and transport cooperation.

Also at a meeting with Foreign Minister Velayati, the Kyrgyz parliamentary speaker stressed the necessity for the expansion of mutual ties. Referring to the grounds for transit cooperation between the two countries, he called for the expansion of that cooperation. He also thanked Iran for transferring Kyrgyz pilgrims to Holy Mecca.

Mr. Velayati, too, stressed the importance of ties between Iran and Kyrgyzstan. He called for the implementation of the decisions made at the meeting of the Iranian and Kyrgyz presidents.

Spokesman: No Plans To Improve Ties With Egypt

NC2405133094 Paris AFP in English 1234 GMT 24 May 94

[Excerpt] Tehran, May 24 (AFP)—Iran does not plan to improve ties with Egypt despite a visit planned by Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati to Cairo next week, a ministry spokesman said Tuesday. Iran and Egypt broke diplomatic ties after the 1979 Islamic revolution and maintain diplomatic contact at interest section level.

The spokesman, quoted on Tuesday by the radical daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI, said Velayati would only go to Cairo to take part in a meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and the visit "has nothing to do with bilateral ties."

"Given the nature of the Egyptian government, Iran has no intention of boosting ties beyond the interest section level," he said, adding that Velayati "would not meet any Egyptian officials" during his visit.

It will be the first to Egypt by a senior Iranian official since the revolution. [passage omitted]

Venezuelan Energy Minister Arrives in Tehran

Seeks Talks on Next OPEC Session

LD2105204394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 21 May 94

[Text] Mr. Erwin Arrieta, the Venezuelan minister of energy and mines, arrived in Tehran on Saturday night for a three-day visit to our country with the aim of exchanging views with the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran about issues relating to the next OPEC session. He was welcomed by [Petroleum Minister Gholam Reza] Aqazadeh.

Received by Hashemi-Rafsanjani

LD2205103594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 22 May 94

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today received Mr. Erwin Arrieta, the Venezuelan energy and mines minister. At the meeting, the Venezuelan energy and mines minister described the role of Iran's history and civilization in the civilization of the world as very valuable. He said: The expansion of warm cooperation with Iran based on mutual interests is very important for us. The grounds for expanding bilateral cooperation are plentiful. He described one of the aims of his visit to Iran, besides assessing the oil issue in the oil-rich countries of Asia, as making use of Iran's valuable experience in the sphere of mines and metals.

According to the Central News Unit, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, for his part, spoke of the activation of the mining sector during the first five-year plan, especially relating to iron ore, coal, refractory materials, copper, and aluminum mines. He said: Side by side with the mining sector, and in light of the high cost of transporting raw materials, the growth of the metallurgy sector is of special importance. Iran is ready to provide Venezuela with its expertise and experience in the fields of oil, gas, mining, the petrochemical industry, and metallurgy.

Meets With Oil Minister Aqazadeh

LD2205105794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 22 May 94

[Text] Ways and means of strengthening OPEC were assessed in today's meeting between Mr. Erwin Arrieta, Venezuelan energy and mines minister, and Mr. Gholam Reza Aqazadeh, oil minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

According to the Central News Unit, the need for greater cooperation among OPEC members, in order to further mutual economic interests, was stressed at the meeting.

Mr. Aqazadeh reiterated that Venezuela and five oil-producing countries of the Persian Gulf currently control two thirds of oil reserves and 70 percent of exports. Despite the existence of different points of view, they could take joint steps toward the strengthening of OPEC, he said.

The Venezuelan mines and energy minister, who met Kuwaiti oil officials before meeting the oil officials of

our country, has said that, in order to achieve better prices, his country supports a reduction in oil production.

Received by Velayati

LD2405081194 Tehran IRNA in English 0518 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Tehran, May 24, IRNA—The visiting Venezuelan Minister of Energy and Mines Erwin Arrieta said here Monday that the only alternative to strengthen OPEC's position is to adhere to the basic principles of the organization and disengage it from political games.

Arrieta who made the remark in a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, stressed that increase in production quota and oil price hike should be carefully monitored, adding that this would be to the interest of both the producer and the consumer.

The Venezuelan minister who is also OPEC president voiced his country's readiness for the expansion of Tehran-Caracas ties and strengthening of cooperation in all fields.

Velayati in reply said that cooperation and exchange of views among OPEC member countries can play an important role in the restoration of the significant stance of the organization.

He stressed that OPEC member states should observe production quota and added that member countries should abide by the organization's decisions.

Velayati also called for the expansion of Tehran-Caracas cooperation at international level and for strengthening of bilateral economic ties.

Meanwhile, in a meeting with Iranian Minister of Mines and Metals Mohammad Hoseyn Mahluji, the Venezuelan minister said that his country is interested in using Iran's advanced technology in exploitation of mines.

The two sides called for implementation of the agreement already reached between the two countries and reviewed purchase by Iran of iron ore, alumina and ferromanganese from Venezuela.

Arrieta and Mahluji are representing their countries in Tehran- Caracas joint economic commission.

President Stresses Subsidy Reform To Be Gradual

LD2005141594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 20 May 94

[First Friday prayers sermon by President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani in Tehran on 20 May—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. [passage omitted] In the first sermon we will continue the discussion on social justice. [passage omitted] In last year's sermons I spoke about resources; but less was said about expenditures last year. So in the first sermon this year we spoke about it. I think I should list a few more in the next few sermons. In the last sermon I referred to subsidies as one of the areas of realizing justice in the distribution of the treasury and the government's financial resources. Briefly, what I meant was that there were unjust subsidies left from the distant past, that some injustices have been eradicated, and there are important areas left. I referred to fuel and bread and some other items [subsidies] which are still unfair. Of course, I explained then that since they are very important and have a great effect on life, one cannot take instantaneous decisions about them. It needs planning, and problems arising in conjunction with removing subsidies should be considered. Therefore, we will keep them until our plan is ready.

In the second five-year plan there are certain indications for this to happen in five years, but in our view even five years are not enough. It needs at least 10 years for us to remove the inequities which exist in fuel and bread consumption in the society. But then, some media rushed in and said that speech smelled of new price rises. It is not so. I stressed then that it will be done with planning. God willing, part of those plans are in the Majles and other parts will be prepared later. Our people should not worry about rash and quick measures in these sensitive times. We will act cautiously. I said then that some actions would arouse resentment against the government because they might put severe pressure on the people. Therefore, such tasks will be carried out with prudence. [passage omitted]

Minister Outlines Subsidies on Essential Goods

LD2205145294 Tehran IRNA in English 1428 GMT 22 May 94

[Text] Mashhad, Khorasan Prov., May 22, IRNA—The government was paying some 6,000 billion rials in subsidies on essential goods in the current year, Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammed Besharati announced here Sunday.

Speaking at a country wide gathering of political and security deputy governors general, Besharati added that some 2,000 billion rials of subsidies has been allocated to bread and some 600 billion rials for pharmaceutics.

The two day seminar is to deal with security along the borders and drug trafficking.

In related news, the public relations office of the plan and budget organization announced today that the government was paying over 20,000 billion rials in subsidies on energy.

Subsidies, Aid Payments Detailed

LD2405163094 Tehran IRNA in English 1549 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Tehran, May 24, IRNA—This calendar year (starting March 21) the Iranian administration will pay

upwards of Rls [rials] 6088 billion in subsidies on consumer products and in aid to the needy people, according to the Plan and Budget Organization of Iran today.

In a communique Tuesday the organization said as much as Rls 2,987,300 million will be paid in subsidy for staple goods and another Rls 665 billion in subsidy for medications and in contribution to foreign medical groups that will visit Iran for surgical operations (of former Muslim combatants wounded in action).

Other commodities, services, and sectors of the society which will be subsidized by the islamic government this year include:

Chemical fertilizers and pesticides: Rls 522 billion.
Bonyad Shahid (Martyrs Foundation): Rls 398.5 billion.
Imam Khomeini Relief Committee: Rls 228 billion.
National Health Organization: Rls 225.8 billion.
Aid to infirm elderly people in rural areas: Rls 174.4 billion.
Differential in foreign exchange for Iranian bursary students abroad: Rls 121.6 billion.
Differential in foreign exchange for importing medical hardware: Rls. 110.9 billion.
Aid to the literacy campaign: Rls 93 billion.
Aid to the Red Crescent Society: Rls 90 billion.
Differential in workers coupons (under the social insurance organiztion): Rls 87 billion.
Aid to press and book exhibitions: Rls 60.9 billion.
Medicare services for the economically unprivileged people: Rls 37.2 billion.
Free food for students: Rls 29 billion.
Differential in foreign exchange for printing textbooks: Rls 26.1 billion.
Differential in price of imported seeds and agricultural hazards funds: Rls 26.5 billion.
Aid to college students welfare funds: Rls 21.8 billion.
Aid to regional water companies: Rls 18.7 billion.
Aid to the headquarters in charge of the former prisoners of war: Rls 15.4 billion.
Aid in contribution to the social security of rural workers: Rls. 14.5 billion.
Aid to prisoners in the national prisons of Iran: Rls. 9.3 billion.

The above does not include latent subsidies and subsidies for fuels.

Pakistan

Leghari Discusses Pressler Amendment, U.S. Ties

BK2405122194 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] The president, Sardar Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, held talks with the U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. Warren Christopher, in Washington last night. In a statement before the talks, the president said efforts should continue for the solution of problems created by the Pressler Amendment. He said the issue could only be settled by pursuing the principles of (?nondiscrimination) and equality. He said Pakistan was trying to improve relations in all such spheres as did not come under the jurisdiction of Pressler Amendment. [sentence as heard] President Leghari said both Pakistan and the United States agreed to revive bilateral relations and friendship during the visit of the U.S. Under Secretary of State [title as heard], Mr. Strobe Talbott, to Pakistan earlier this year.

Mr. Christopher also made a brief statement before the talks and referred to shared concern of the two countries on issues like elimination of weapons of mass destruction, regional peace and security, and economic reforms.

Later, when Mr. Christopher left the venue after concluding his talks, the Assistant Secretary of State [title as heard], Mr. Talbott, remained there and continued deliberations with the president of Pakistan.

Leghari Lauded for Reaffirming NPT Policy

BK2405013394 Lahore JANG in Urdu 22 May 94 p 3

[Editorial:"Nuclear Nonproliferation ... President Leghari's Categorical Announcement"]

[Text] Talking to the Associated Press of Pakistan correspondent in London, President Farooq Ahamd Khan Leghari has said Pakistan will not accept any unilateral restriction on the nuclear nonproliferation issue, because a solution that imposes restrictions on Pakistan but not on India is unacceptable. We want restrictions on the entire world, especially on all countries in the region. From the very beginning, Pakistan has adhered to a principled and just stand on nuclear nonproliferation—to forcefully support the issue, especially to extend all sorts of cooperation to the international community in eliminating a nuclear arms race in South Asia—provided India signs the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] at the global level or be prepared to endorse any acceptable solution on the issue at the regional level. But, as India is crazy to become a mini-superpower in the region, forcing its hegemony on other countries, it is bent on rejecting every proposal on nuclear nonproliferation which impedes any progress in the direction. Now, after Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's visit to the United States, President Clinton himself has admitted that India is not willing to extend any cooperation on nuclear nonproliferation and human rights issues and has refused to accept the U.S. proposals as well. Under these circumstances, the sincerity and truthfulness of Pakistan's position has come to the foreground that it is not Pakistan erecting obstacles in the way of nuclear nonproliferation but rather India, which is not prepared to curtail its nuclear program at any cost. As long as India does not do it, Pakistan is not ready to accept any unilateral restrictions on its nuclear program. Now that the differences between India and the United States on the nuclear nonproliferation issue could not be removed, Pakistan should take advantage of the situation and

intensify its efforts to convince the United States of the soundness of its position so as to get the illegitimate embargo on economic and military aid lifted.

Editorial Assails Minister's Remarks on Nuclear Issue

BK2305083694 Karachi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 21 May 94 p 10

[Editorial: "The Nuclear Program Is the Protector of the Nation, and the Nation Knows How To Protect It"]

[Text] Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, the opposition leader and former prime minister, has said that the nation does not want to make any compromise on Kashmir and nuclear issues. The Pakistan People's Party government may cease to exist, but the nuclear program cannot be wound up. Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, chairman of the National Assembly's Kashmir Committee, has also said that the foreign minister's statement about the acceptance of the U.S. proposal for inspection of Pakistan's nuclear program is tantamount to ridiculing the whole nation. The Pakistan Muslim League-J also expressed concern over the foreign minister's statement about Pakistan's readiness to accept the inspection of its nuclear installations and declared that we will protect the nuclear program the way people protect the dignity of mothers and sisters. Sheikh Abdur Rashid, deputy chief organizer of the Muslim League and member of the National Assembly, has warned in a peculiar way. He said that he will burn himself at Lahore's Minar-i-Pakistan tower if the present government allows a nuclear inspection. Various religious parties have also condemned the foreign minister's statement and expressed the apprehension that the government might have knelt down to the United States. They feel that the term of "nonphysical inspection" of Pakistan's nuclear installations actually means the American idea of establishing Indian hegemony in the region. Hamid Gul, former chief of the Inter Service Intelligence, has also said that accepting the U.S. conditions on the nuclear program will be a national tragedy.

The foreign minister's statement hints at grave dangers. The nation does not accept the U.S. inspection in any manner. We had taken a strong note of the foreign minister's remarks in these columns the other day. Despite his prompt statement refuting his earlier remarks, we had suggested him to think twice and be very careful before making any statement on the most sensitive issues of the nation. The foreign affairs department requires great caution. The past record of Sardar Asif Ali is not that enviable, either. He had accused Pakistan of being involved in terrorism when he was a minister in the previous government. We had to suffer for his accusation, and the sufferings manifested themselves in the form of U.S. steps against us and our failure to present the Kashmir issue at the Geneva Human Rights Commission meeting. Similarly, he continues to make irresponsible remarks about Islam. A progovernment paper issued a clarification on his behalf yesterday. The irony is that instead of accepting the clarification as true, the paper published an editorial supporting the foreign minister's statement. The Foreign Office also issued a rejection of the statement and blamed the newspapers, saying that they carried the report in an irresponsible manner, despite the fact that the same report was also released by the government news agency of ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN itself.

The nation is not willing to accept the argument that the foreign minister was not careful when making the statement or that the press attributed a wrong statement to him. There is definitely something wrong, and the statement, not the refusal, is more important. As the issue is very sensitive and delicate, and it is feared that a compromise has been made on a program that grantees national security and the country's independence, it becomes imperative that the foreign minister make a clarification of his statement to the nation, either at the Senate or the National Assembly or on television, and assure the people that his government is not involved in any compromise with the United States. Only after this will the nation decide whether it is satisfied with the clarification or the statement.

Any kind of compromise on the nuclear program is not in the interest of Pakistan. The nation has already been afflicted by grief at the disclosure of the news that the nuclear program has been capped. The United States is now demanding an inspection. It is apparently trying to compensate by promising to supply the F-16 planes. The fact is that the F-16 is Pakistan's right. The cost of these planes have already been paid by Pakistan under a bilateral trade deal. Any kind of interference by the United States in our nuclear program, whether physical or nonphysical, that is, whether a visit to our country by a team of U.S. inspectors as was done in Iraq or monitoring the Kahuta nuclear plant through telescopes installed on satellites, is not acceptable to the Pakistani nation. If a government accepts such a proposal and defends it by juggling words, it will only be committing an act of stupidity. The reality is that the nation knows how to protect the nuclear program, which protects the Pakistani nation. The present government might have some ill intentions, but it should not make any mistake in understanding the nation's aspirations.

Minister Reaffirms Commitment to Nonproliferation

BK2405162694 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, has said that the government is committed to nuclear nonproliferation without any discrimination. He said in Islamabad today that Pakistan will not accept any measures which only apply to Pakistan. He said Pakistan is willing to continue consultation with the United States within the framework of the ongoing dialogue on security and nonproliferation in South Asia and will give serious consideration to any specific proposals the United States may make in these consultations.

Editorial Criticizes Clinton Report on Pakistan

BK1505140194 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 15 May 94 p 3

[Editorial: "President Clinton's Incomprehensible Claim"]

[Text] The U.S. policy on South Asia continues to change constantly. Until recently, the U.S. Government had held a very strong position against Pakistan on the nuclear nonproliferation issue. Consequently, not only did U.S. economic and military aid to Pakistan remain suspended for the last four years, the delivery of planes for which Pakistan already paid $658 million appeared to be impossible. For some time, there had been little change in the U.S. stand. The United States then started describing Kashmir as a disputed territory and exerted some pressure on India on its nuclear program. An impression was created that the United States was exerting the same kind of pressure on both India and Pakistan, and identical pressure was also being exerted on both of them on the missile program, too.

However, President Clinton has now sent a report to the U.S. Congress in which a bizarre claim has been made that Pakistan has been blackmailing India by saying that if the Kashmir issue is not resolved, then not only will a war break out between the two countries, it will be a nuclear war. In his report, President Clinton has said that the impression created by Pakistan that a durable peace cannot be established in South Asia and that the region will face danger until the Kashmir issue is resolved is also incorrect. Though President Clinton has expressed an unrealistic and incomprehensible opinion in his report, it is gratifying that 12 members of the U.S. Congress, in a letter to President Clinton, have demanded that the Indian prime minister, who is beginning a visit to the United States, on 14 May be asked to stop human rights violations in Kashmir and apprised that if India wants technical and economic assistance from the United States, then the former should also pursue the ethical principles that are very dear to the United States. The letter added that India has been holding the 12.5 million people of occupied Kashmir under its domination against their will and is trying to subjugate them with the help of 500,000 troops. The letter also asked the U.S. President to play his role in securing a peaceful and durable solution to the Kashmir dispute. We believe that the United States wields considerable influence and is capable of playing an effective role. If the United States plays a role in resolving this dispute, then not only will it b contributing to paving the way for a just world order, it will also be making several generations of Kashmiris, Pakistanis, and Indians grateful to the United States.

Apart from the aforesaid letter from the U.S. legislators, grave concern was expressed by a number of Democratic and Republican Congressmen over the Kashmir situation at a function marking the release of a latest book on Kashmir by the eminent U.S. writer, Professor William Baker. They also expressed amazement over the United States and other developed nation for their remaining silent spectators to the human rights violations in Kashmir. With tearful eyes, Professor William Baker told the gathering that he had no words to describe the awful scenes of atrocities he witnessed during his visit to Kashmir. The views expressed by prominent U.S. legislators and scholars indicate that informed, influential, and powerful circles of the United States are well aware of the situation in Kashmir.

Under such circumstances, President Clinton's allegation against Pakistan that it is blackmailing India on the Kashmir question and creating a wrong impression in the world that a durable peace cannot be achieved in South Asia unless the Kashmir issue is resolved reflects the incomprehensible logic of the U.S. President. The head of the world's most powerful country should not be so unfamiliar with the issues of an important region and the nature of dangers it faces. It has been America's age-old weakness and desire to drag India as close to itself as possible. In the past, a sort of justification was that the United States wanted to keep India away from the Soviet Union, but no such compulsion exists now. Therefore, the United States should keep in view the objective realities while dealing with India.

On the eve of Narasimha Rao's visit, the Indian Government has announced that its missile manufacture and testing will continue according to schedule, and the entire program will be completed by July. It is amazing is that despite such a categorical announcement by India, the U.S. President is alleging that Pakistan is raising the specter of a nuclear war. It is imperative that the Government of Pakistan immediately obtain the latest report of President Clinton and apprise the U.S. Government of Pakistan's reaction after studying it. President Leghari is scheduled to visit the United States, and he will hold talks with U.S. authorities despite it being a private visit. These talks will yield results only when Pakistan's viewpoint is clearly explained to the U.S. side. The Government of Pakistan should convey its reaction in categorical terms to Washington on the U.S. President's latest report.

Bhutto, Delegation Depart on Visit to Nepal

BK2405063594 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0600 GMT 24 May 94

[Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has left Islamabad for Kathmandu on a three-day official visit to Nepal. She will hold talks with Nepalese leaders on bilateral relations and regional and international issues. The talks will also cover matters relating to the South Asian Association For Regional Cooperation. The prime minister is accompanied by Foreign Minister Asif Ahmad Ali; Water and Power Minister Malik Ghulam Musatafa Khar; Makhdum Shahabuddin, minister of state for finance; Begum Shahnaz Wazir Ali, special assistant to the prime minister; Balochistan Chief Minister Zulfiqar Ali Magsi; and Balochistan Assembly Speaker Abdul Wahid Baloch.

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